

Thunderous applause after the first National Rock Competition can not hide the performers' shortcomings.

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Most support the installation of 500 condom vending machines in Haidian District, though sales are not expected to break records.

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The 4th Beijing International Cultural Tourism Festival.

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# BEIJING TODAY

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## Bush Postponing Asia Visit Understandable

China understands US President George W. Bush's postponing his scheduled visit to the three Asian countries of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday.

Spokesman Zhu Bangzao says the move is understandable in the light of the recent terrorist attacks in America.

According to Zhu, Washington notified China of this decision Tuesday night.

The two sides have agreed that President Jiang Zemin and President Bush will meet in Shanghai during the APEC meeting, he added.

(Xinhua)



Parking lots are filling up faster as more and more Chinese families purchase their own private cars

Photo by Zhuang Jian

## New Policies Simplify Car Registration

By Zhao Pu

Getting your new car on the road is about to become a lot easier in Beijing and other major Chinese cities. The Ministry of Public Security issued new policies last week that remove much of the red tape associated with the registration of new cars.

Under the new policies, the complex formalities and numerous fees for registration have been abolished, reducing the time taken to issue a license plate from a week to just one day, provided the car passes the standard check and the owner is able to provide sufficient credentials. The credentials should include the owner's ID, the purchase receipt, eligibility certificate and purchase tax receipt.

### Exemptions for high-end vehicles

The revisions also exempt domestically produced cars meeting certain size and quality standards from the necessity of undergoing the standard check prior to the issuing of license plates. The State Economic and Trade Commission is yet to define the qualifying size and quality standard. Imported cars will still be required to undergo inspection, at least in the short term.

### Personalized number plates on the way

The new regulations also allow for car owners to choose their own license plate number, in accordance with related distribution rules. Analysts say the newly issued policies not only simplify the car registration process, but are also a step toward integration with the international market in the lead-up to China's joining the WTO.

The policies will come into effect on a trial basis on October 8 in 15 cities including Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. They will be implemented nationwide at the beginning of next year.

China does not have a tradition of carnivals, but this situation is rapidly changing



Photo by Wei Tong

## Beijing Swings into Carnival



Photo by Wei Tong

By Shan Jinliang

Residents of the capital had the opportunity to witness another major event this week. The 4th International Tourism Culture Festival opened Sunday, kicking off five days of entertainment and fun with a splendid opening ceremony parade down Ping'an Avenue.

Spectators started arriving soon after 7:00 am, and by the time the parade started, at 9:00 am, thousands of people had crammed along either side of the street, several layers deep. When the first troupe appeared, a comic orchestra from Switzerland, the crowd burst into enthusiastic applause. They were followed by Hawaiian dancers and cartoon elves, who won waves and whistles from the youngsters. Altogether some 60 troupes from China and

around the world marched, danced, ran and tumbled down the avenue, delighting and enchanting the audience. As one grandmother said, "You can observe the whole world, right here in Beijing!"

### Venice Carnevale - Beijing carnival

Carnivals are always the most unforgettable experiences, whether in the west or in the east. Mr. He, a newspaper editor related his experience at the carnival in Venice, Italy a few years ago.

From the moment their plane touched down, all the Chinese in the group were fascinated to see how the local people were really taking part in the festivities, dressing up in self-made garments of various colors and styles. Absolutely forgetting their itinerary, the Chinese hastily made up themselves with any decorations that came to hand and dashed to join in the long and irregular parade.

Actually Beijing has witnessed something that could be described as a spontaneous carnival recently. The extraordinary scenes that occurred in downtown Beijing following the announcement on July 13 that the capital would host the 2008 Olympics were both impromptu and festive! Prior to the pronouncement by the then IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, tens of thousands had gathered in Tian'anmen Square to await the historic moment. On the declaration of Beijing's success, people in the square cried, jumped, danced and applauded, while cars in Chang'an Avenue

all sounded their horns.

Transport ground to a halt in the temporary chaos. The police didn't seem to mind at all, many joining in the exchange of congratulations, even hugging strangers in a rather un-Chinese display of affection!

### Ready for the carnival, Beijingers?

Carnival-like activities have been, or are to be held in several major Chinese cities, including Shenzhen in Guangdong Province, Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province and Shanghai. The Carnival Festival in Dalian on September 16 has been seen as the first successful "audience participation" carnival in China, with many local senior citizens and young kids merging into the waves of dancing in the street.

A survey carried out by the organizers of the Shanghai carnival revealed that only 14% of the local population showed an interest in it. Wang Shi'er from the organizing committee argued that Chinese prefer to be spectators rather than participants in a carnival.

To date, Beijing has never staged the kind of loosely organized, even anarchic kind of carnival like that of Venice. However with the success of such events in other Chinese cities, perhaps it won't be long before Beijingers have the opportunity to really participate in a carnival, as opposed to enjoy it as spectators. Whether or not they will take up this opportunity remains to be seen.

Spectators in Ping'an Avenue enjoy the parade from the sidelines



Photo by Wei Tong

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI

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# Shining World Coming to South City

By Tan Weiping/Shan Jinliang

Many old Beijingers are not satisfied with living conditions in Chongwen District in the south city. Now businessmen are rushing to purchase commodity houses in Shining World in Chongwen District on September 19. This marks the beginning of a prosperous south city, analysts say.

Chongwen District Govener Li Xiaoguang says the development of the south city, including Chongwen District, used to be given little attention, which as a result affected the whole image of the capital city from last year.

Guang'an Avenue was renovated this July, which marked the beginning of the area's transformation. Shining World, located in Guang'an Avenue area, was opened to the public on September 6. With two two-way streets, the 1.8 km-long Shining World presents an ordered layout stretching from Zhushikou in the west to Ciqikou in the east. Guang'an Avenue on the inner side, and the two sides of 15 office buildings as a pedes-

trian street will create a pure business environment.

Shining World is composed of the Front Gate, a traditional business district, and modern Chongwai Street. It is learned from the city's planning committee that the Front Gate Street will be converted into a business pedestrian street while Chongwai Street is under construction.

Shining World links the above streets, forming a U-shaped business circle. Apart from these, Qinian (Hall of Prayers for Good Harvest) Street and Zhengyi (Justice) Road are due to run through Shining World.

Li noted that with the completion of Shining World, the surrounding area of the Street, even all Chongwen District and the south city, would begin to prosper economically.

With the most advanced local facilities, and first-rate service, Shining World is predicted to transcend Wangfujing Street and Xidan business district.



The Merchants Center offers businessmen a picturesque environment  
Photo by Zhuang Jian

## Chaoyang Business Festival Reaps Good Harvest

By Wang Yuan / Qian Yiwu / Shan Jinliang

The 2nd Beijing Chaoyang International Business Festival came to an end with a triumph of 77.3 billion yuan on September 22 in the Kerry Center. Prior to this, the construction of Beijing's Fortune Plaza started from September 17, only four days after the unveiling of the CBD plan.

Among the 25 projects, 18 with a total capital of 42 billion yuan were contracted in the festival, not including the 7 intentional projects with a capital volume of 36 billion.

Average investment capital for every project reaches over 3 billion yuan with the highest of 10 billion.

3 projects each with 10 billion yuan investments rank top of the list: the Dongba New Town Project, under Hong Kong entrepreneur Li Ka-shing; Phase III of the China World Trade Center by Hong Kong's Kerry Group; Changying Town Resident Apartments of Tianhong Group.

The Dongba project is to develop an area of 350 hectares in Chaoyang District. Two other projects follow on the heels of the mega ones listed above, said Dong Xuemei, an official from the Foreign & Economic Trade Committee of Chaoyang District in charge of the festival. One is The New City International Project, of Vantone Group and Hong Kong land, has an investment of 5 billion yuan to construct luxury apartments. The other is the Laiguangying Town Renovation of Hong Kong Holdings Group.

The projects are involved in CBD construction, city border development, apartment renovation, modern service and tourism projects. This exceeds the achievement of the first festival last year in its scale and contents.

Dong says nearly all the projects will be under construction over the next one or two years, with some due for completion in about two years.

## Northern Section of 5th Ring Road Opens

By Wang Yanyan

The first section of the new 5th Ring Road opened on September 22. The 15.2 km section lies on the northern part of the road, and links the Capital International Airport with the Badaling Expressway.

This new artery surrounding the city greatly improves traffic conditions around the Olympic Stadium. It will encompass Yanqing Suburban County, Changping Suburban County, Haidian District, Chaoyang District and Shunyi Suburban County in its range. The 5th Ring Road is 10 to 15 kilometers away from the city's center with 5 to 10 kilometers' distance from the 4th Ring Road. According to the location of districts, Beijing

refers to the area inside the 5th Ring Road.

This 100-kilometer 5th Ring road will be built in five steps. The whole project is due for completion in 2003 with a total investment of 13 billion yuan. The beginning stage opened up the country in November 5th 2000. Up until now, nearly 18 kilometers of Expressway have opened, and the construction of the 2nd and 3rd steps will start in November this year.

The planned speed is around 100 kilometers with three lanes on either side. 100-meter wide green belts will be incorporated on both sides. At present, there are no toll charges due to complex approving programs.

## Shop Down Your Phone Line

By Zhao Pu

The Beijing Municipal Post Bureau has recently bought dozens of green delivery trucks to support its newly developed service, telephone shopping, which was introduced this year.

"As traditional business shrinks, telephone shopping is becoming one of the major developing trends for the new post services in cities," said Liu Baishun, researcher in the Business Development Dept. under the Post Bureau.

The establishment of the new service is a natural response to the market's demand, explained Liu. Since traditional postal services are losing ground to the telephone and Internet, the post offices must find new ways to survive in the competitive market. However, market research has shown increasing demand of commodity delivery in cities.

Thus, a commodity delivery

center was established responding to market demand. Similar to shopping on the Internet, customers can call the Beijing Post Service Center (185) and dial 8 for the telephone shopping service to subscribe for a wide range of commodities, like Beijing Roast Duck, telephone cards, moon cakes, among others. The ordered goods will be delivered by post offices free of charge by express delivery.

Besides telephone shopping, other new services focusing on improving convenience for local people have been introduced by post offices. These include insurance purchases, performance tickets sales, paying telephone fees.

"Though we have the advantage of large post office networks, more efforts should be made in the development of new services and system reform to regain the market," remarked Liu.

## Mobile Consumers Given More Leverage

By Wang Yanyan

Three guarantees for mobile phones formulated by the State Quality Supervising Testing Bureau, Ministry of Information Industry and State Administration for Industry and Commerce, came into effect from September 24. If consumers are not satisfied with the quality of their mobile phones, they are guaranteed an exchange, repair or return.

At present, consumers can merely exchange their cell phones within a month or repair within a year. Even if they are not satisfied with the quality itself, they can't return phones for a refund.

The new regulation clearly defines the responsibility of merchants as well as sets standards for maintenance workers. They must hold certificates otherwise they won't be recognized as qualified. Also they must be responsible for mistakes when repairing cell phones.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Information Industry has set up a Maintenance Management Center and Complaint center in order to guarantee consumers' rights, and make the biggest mobile phone market in the world more manageable.

## Rooting out Fakes Rewarded

By Zhao Pu

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Technical Supervision rewarded four people for reporting fakes last week.

Receiving a total of 8,450 yuan, they became the first group to be awarded after the issuing of the Regulation on Beijing Quality and Technical Supervision Fake Disclosure Awards. According to the regulation, the maximum for the bonus is 100,000 yuan.

None of the four reporters showed up in person to be awarded. In order to protect the reporter's legal interests, their personal information is not to be publicized or revealed without their consent, according to the regulation.

## Pawnshops Turned Inside Out

By Zhao Pu

The State Economic and Trade Commission and the Ministry of Public Security are jointly carrying out a nationwide inspection and rectification of pawnshops from this month.

The inspection, aimed at standardizing the pawnshop business and blocking up disposal channels of the booty, focuses on identifying the pawnshops dealing with illegal business.

Pawnshops under inspection include those handed over to the Ministry of Public Security by the People's Bank of China for supervision, as well as those without legal authorization or licenses.

A Pawnshop Business License will be issued to qualified pawnshops after the inspection. Legally authorized pawnshops that do not infringe the relevant laws and regulations will be sustained.

While those with the following features will be removed: shops running illegal businesses; those with records of unauthorized suspension of business for over 6 months; those without a regular place for business operation; those proved to be unqualified by the annual inspection of special business in 2000, and those deprived of the Special Business License by the public security organs.



Decked out with a Chinese lantern, the Park Hyatt Beijing will occupy the upper floors of the central building of the future Beijing Silvertie Center

## Chinese Lantern Will Shine Over Golden Cross Super Five Star Hotel Gilds CBD

By Zhao Pu

A super five-star hotel, the Park Hyatt Beijing, will occupy the southwestern corner of the Golden Cross in the Central Business District (CBD) in 2005. The top of the hotel building will be shaped like a Chinese lantern, facing the China World Trade Center.

The hotel will occupy the upper floors of the future Beijing Silvertie Center, thus becoming the highest hotel in the city with an imposing height of 250 meters. The lower floors of the building are planned to be given over to executive apartments for sale. Hyatt International Corporation, the biggest hotel chain in the world, will manage the hotel. It runs over 200 Hyatt hotels and resorts all over the globe, with 7 in China. The Park Hyatt Beijing belongs to the highest-ranking super five-star category, and is the first of its kind in China.

Designed for the most outstanding entrepreneurs, the Park Hyatt Hotels have a set of stan-

dards that provide better conditions than the five stars. This can be seen from the limited number of guest rooms, the most luxurious facilities and most importantly, the high-quality service. Park Hyatt Beijing will have only 230 guest rooms and is designed in accordance with all these standards, according to Beijing Silvertie Property Co., Ltd., the investor of the Beijing Silvertie Center.

The top of the building is shaped like a traditional Chinese lantern, adding a striking Chinese flavor to the whole construction. This perfectly corresponds to designer John Portman's belief that "the architecture must recognize the time, place and circumstances in order to respond to the unique physical and cultural character that is the essence of each place."

The Chinese lantern is due to shine over the Golden Cross in 2005, with construction beginning next year.

Meanwhile, a Grand Hyatt Beijing is opening for business next month in the Oriental Plaza.



## Yinguangxia in 13-day Drop

By Yang Xiao

Shenzhen listed company Yinguangxia, (SZSE: 0557) which resumed transaction after it was discovered to have fabricated large sums of profit, hit lower limit for 13 consecutive days and closed at 7.83 yuan.

The markets shrugged off the trading resumption. Analysts estimate that it will continue to drop, but the speed may decrease. The price already lost 70% of its value before the news was revealed last month.

Hundreds of angry shareholders of Yinguangxia, whose reputation and share price nose-dived following reports of financial fraud, joined hands in a bid to bring a lawsuit against the firm on September 18.

Around 500 shareholders have called on the Shanghai Allbright Law Office with the intention of suing the company and the accountants that signed financial reports containing allegedly fabricated earning figures.

Hitting lower limit for 13 consecutive days has never happened in China's 11-year stock market history. Last time China Venture Capital (0048) faced 9 consecutive days after hitting lower limit at the beginning of 2001 when the CSRC uncovered the company's illegal manipulation.

## Anheuser-Busch Triumphs

At "Best Employer in China" Awards

By Frank Liu

Investing in people development and producing top quality products is the winning combination to building a successful business in China and being a responsible employer, according to Anheuser-Busch Asia Inc. (AB), recently named as one of the Top 10 Best Employers in China.

The brewer of Budweiser and Bud Ice beer was awarded the title by global management consultants, Hewitt Associates LLC and media giant, Dow Jones & Co. in recognition for its strong commitment to employee well-being, and professional training and development.

"On behalf of Budweiser and the entire AB operation in China, we are honored to receive this award," said Mr. Philip Davis, Vice-president and Managing Director of AB China and Chairman of the Budweiser Wuhan International Brewery. "We believe that what makes us a successful company is our employees. They are the backbone of operations, and it is their dedication and commitment that allows us to bring the premium quality of Budweiser and Bud Ice to Chinese consumers."

"AB is a happy and enjoyable place to work. That, I think, is very much in line with Budweiser's image and tradition. Our employees know we are producing top quality products and we believe they are all proud to be a part of this process," added Mr. Davis, who has been with the company for 22 years.



China Railcom plans to use its fixed line network to compete with the monopoly China Telecom. Above right is China Telecom's logo

Photo by Chen Shuyi

# Railcom Ready to Compete

By Jason Young

China Railcom Beijing branch finally made a deal with China Telecom on linking the fixed line network on September 23. Railcom will release 1 million telephone numbers by the end of this month.

As a result, fixed-line users can save 15% on long-distance and 10% on local calls thanks to a promotion by Railcom aimed at snaring away China Telecom's customers.

Railcom's long-distance service will be made available to customers by the end of October.

Railcom, the country's second biggest fixed-line carrier, now has access to all of China Telecom's network capabilities. That includes Beijing Telecom, the

provider. Its role as the gateway of Railcom's domestic callers to overseas phone networks makes it a critical player.

The move is a milestone for phone services in China and effectively breaks up China Telecom's monopoly.

"Railcom's network now can handle 12 million users, although the carrier only deals with 2 million users along the current lines which Railcom's own networks run," said Railcom spokesman Dong Binfeng.

The company has attracted China Telecom customers in 52 cities in 16 provinces, he said.

That pales in comparison to China Telecom, which boasts more than 160 million fixed-line users.

Railcom officials say they are aiming to grab between 5% and 10% of the market within five years.

Industry watchers think that may be overly ambitious if Railcom does not introduce more services.

At present, Railcom's chief means of attracting China Telecom customers is to offer discounts on rates for long-distance and local calls, Dong said.

By the end of October, customers of both networks will easily be able to use the other's network for long-distance service. China Telecom users will dial 068 before the number for Railcom's service, while Railcom clients can dial 190 before the number to use China Telecom's service.

Railcom also hopes to make a dent in China Telecom's dominance of public phones. The first Railcom pay phones will become operational at Beijing Railway Station, a move that is expected to be followed by the installment of 10,000 public phones in nine cities by the year's end, Dong said.

Rumors continue to swirl around a possible China Telecom split that might make the enormous corporation more efficient.

The split also could further break up the monopoly. The final decision on that is awaited from the State Development Planning Commission and the Office for Restructuring the Economic System under the State Council.



Photo by JY

keting management. Graduating from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, He has combined a unique way of marketing management with oriental managing culture, ancient mil-

## Starting Salary of 3 Million

### Fresh graduate confident in unproven strategy

By Wang Yanyan

25-year-old He Huabiao has been engaged by Toyota Pa Shun Co. Ltd. with an annual salary of 3 million yuan in return for 5 successive years access to his self-produced principles of marketing management. Graduating from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, He has combined a unique way of marketing management with oriental managing culture, ancient mil-

itary science and western ideologies for marketing.

This new theory has aroused the interest of Chen Fei, the President of Pa Shun. "I want to invite a kind of thinking with eastern culture rather than He himself," said Chen.

Holding a Master's Degree in Chinese Culture, He has found many Chinese enterprises lacking instructive marketing strategies and managing experiences. Such a dearth has encouraged him to find a nationalized marketing management system adjusted to present China. He began to seek the answer from his interest, traditional Chinese culture, by summing up

Chairman Mao's military strategy, negotiating skills from Gui Guzi Tactics (a book advocating trickery and argumentation in the Warring States), forecasts for the modern economy from the Book of Changes (a Chinese classic of philosophy, also called Yi Jing), and usage of power from Sun-tzu's Art of War.

Pa Shun mainly deals with medical and industrial chemicals, as well as traditional Chinese and western medicines. The general headquarters in Hong Kong, now it has expanded to the US, Canada, South-eastern Asia with funds of around 100 million US dollars.

But we still have to see whether

He, a student with no experience, is worth an annual three million yuan, and whether the new system of marketing management is effective. Moreover, it raises a hope for arts students that the so-called useless humanities can also bring a bright future and good fortune for themselves.

Beijing Today called Pa Shun's branch in Wuhan, as well as He Huabiao himself. When asked in which form he will receive the three million, and about the proportions of shares and cash, He refused to leak anything. Although He has promised to provide information about Pa Shun and himself, up to now, there's no word.

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# Land Oil and Gas Fields Ready for Exploration

By Zhao Hongyi

China has opened 18 oil and gas fields to foreign investors for exploration and drilling in the near future, confirmed Cao Zhenyan of PetroChina on September 25. This is the first time for the country to open this field to foreign investors.

According to Mr. Cao, most of the fields lie in oil and gas depository rich areas of the Tarim Basin in northwestern Xinjiang, Erdose Basin in northern Inner Mongolia and Song-liao Basin in northeastern Heilongjiang province. The potential depository of oil and gas of these 18 fields amounts to 20 percent of the total of PetroChina's current production.

Technically, one of the 18 fields opened is for

trial drilling, 3 for natural gas exploration, 11 for oil exploration and 3 for production renovation. More preferential treatment will also be granted to those interested and participating.

According to Mr. Zeng Peiyan, minister of the country's State Economic Planning and Development Commission, foreign investors involved in the exploration of oil and gas in the western part of the country can enjoy a 15 percent reduction from all taxation. 13 of the 18 oil and gas fields opened this time are located in the western part of the country, and qualify for these preferential treatments.

As the country is developing its poor western areas rich in natural resources, the central government has already opened the construction of

the natural gas pipeline from western Xinjiang to eastern Shanghai to worldwide open bidding, as well as natural gas pipeline networks in the provinces along the thousand-mile energy transportation line. In addition, the country opened oil and gas exploration and drilling in the sea to foreign investors several years ago.

As Mr. Cao further explained to our reporter, the reason PetroChina opened these fields is to accelerate the country's oil and gas exploration to meet the dramatically increasing consuming demand in the country. The stance PetroChina took this time will be kept at least for the next several years and the country will focus on more oil and gas production over the same period of time.

## National Treatment to Foreign Banks in Five Years

By Zhao Hongyi

A series of reform in China's banking service industry will be carried out in the five years after the country's official entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). This means foreign banks will enjoy full national treatment status and operate their business in Renminbi by then.

Mr. Dai Xianglong, governor of the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, delivered this encouraging message on September 19 at the international forum of "21st Century: China and the World".

According to Mr. Dai, the official document signed for China's entry into WTO stipulates that foreign banks will be able to offer services in foreign currencies to individual Chinese customers in the same year as the country becomes a formal member of WTO. Two years later, foreign banks will be able to open business in Renminbi to Chinese enterprises and companies, and business in Renminbi to individual Chinese in five years.

Geographically, the country will gradually increase the number of cities where foreign banks can operate. As Mr. Dai unveiled, the country has already dismissed the restrictions on office laid out by foreign banks and has allowed foreign banks to open business in Renminbi in Shanghai and Shenzhen on a trial basis. Over the next five years, all applications will depend on approval from the People's Bank of China. All these restrictions will be gradually eliminated in the five-year transitional period.

## Overseas Headhunters to Be Unleashed

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign investment will be allowed to enter the Chinese human resources industry under certain conditions.

The rule of Provisions on the Management of Foreign Recruitment Firms in China, promulgated by the Ministry of Personnel and State Bureau of Industry and Commerce, will be put into effect on October 1.

It is the first rule to regulate the role of foreign capital in this service sector. But foreign companies have to establish joint ventures with their Chinese counterparts before taking up any human resource service in the country.

According to statistics, by the end of the year 2000, more than 3700 intermediaries emerged in the country's human resources market. More than 150 thousand agencies and 1.5 million staff are involved in this business. Almost 100 thousand persons received evaluation and one million more received technical training courses from these agencies. Last year, more than 10 thousand human resources exchange fairs were held with 480 thousand employing organizations and 115 million visitors participating. In addition, the on-line human resources market also developed rapidly with 547 professional websites and 60 million visitors annually.

Since 1994, quite a number of world famous head hunting companies have established their presence in the country like China Team, JOBBANK. But most of these foreign companies are not fully satisfied with the new policy.

"For instance, what does it mean by saying establishing joint ventures with Chinese counterparts?" said one professional foreign head hunter working in Beijing, "can you tell me what kind of joint ventures?"

"In addition, we cannot find the suitable and qualified domestic counterparts for cooperation."

But on the contrary, domestic human resources management companies and headhunters are quite encouraged by and optimistic about the competition lying ahead.

"This sector needs more knowledge of the industries you are servicing, more knowledge of where you are located and more skills to communicate with others," said Mr. Ji Yun, general manager of Beijing Talent Consulting Agency, one of the pioneers in this industry. "Capital investment and technologies are not the most important factors here. Therefore, foreign companies have to join hands with us. Otherwise, there is no way for them to know what they should know here."

"Opening up offers more chances for us to learn from abroad and more chances for us to grow," said Mr. Ji, smiling.



Henderson Center in Beijing  
Photo by Zhuang Jian

## Hong Kong Property Tycoons Eye Mainland Market

By Zhao Hongyi

The high profit return and great potential of the real estate market on the Chinese mainland is attracting property developers of Hong Kong. In fact, all of the six major real estate players in Hong Kong, namely Cheung Kong Holdings Limited, Hutchison Whampoa Property Limited, New World Development Co., Henderson Land Development Co. Ltd., Sun Hung Kai Properties Ltd., Hang Lung Group and Kerry Properties Limited, have already established their roots in the market.

Cheung Kong Holdings Limited and Hutchison Whampoa Property Limited have always joined hands in project construction and market opportunity searching worldwide. Hutchison Whampoa alone has acquired a total of 4 million square meters of land for developing on the Chinese mainland. There are now projects underway in Beijing, Shanghai, Qingdao, Chongqing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan and Zhuhai. Hotels and office buildings include the Oriental Plaza in Beijing, Westgate Mall Tower, Walton Plaza in Shanghai. Residential projects include Seasons Villas in Shanghai, Metropolitan Plaza and Yang He Garden in Chongqing. Real estate tycoon Li Kashing's empire recently launched its new residential project in Dongba, Beijing, up till now the largest project of its kind on the mainland. Total investment is estimated over 10 billion yuan (around 1.25 billion US dollars).

New World Development Co. has bought more than 20 million square meters of land. Most of its current projects are located in Guangzhou and Shenzhen. In the year 2000 alone, the group finished the construction of residential properties over 930 thousand square meters and earned an annual profit over 200 million yuan.

Henderson Land Development Co. Ltd holds a total of 22 million square meters of land. The group focused on properties in downtown areas of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou: the Henderson Center in Beijing, and the Skycity in Shanghai.

Sun Hung Kai Properties Ltd has just started business on the mainland in recent years. Most of its projects are located in Guangzhou and other cities in the south. Hang Lung Group is one of the heavy investors on the Chinese mainland with a total amount of over 1.2 billion US dollars. Most of its projects are in Shanghai.

Kerry Properties Limited has built its Kerry Centers in Beijing and Shenzhen, all of which are office buildings.



Oriental Plaza in Beijing  
Photo by Chen Shuyi



## China's Skies Stoke Fierce Competition

By Zhao Hongyi

It is estimated that in the upcoming 20 years, China needs at least 1764 commercial aircraft worth 144 billion US dollars. This explains the fierce competition among world famous aircraft manufacturers in the country initiated several years ago, Beijing Today learnt from the Aviation Expo/China 2001, the ninth of its kind held September 19-22 in China International Exhibition Center, Beijing.

Of the total 1764 commercial aircraft, almost 30%, or 560 will be large-scale commercial jetliners valued at 91 billion US dollars. Suppliers of these jetliners will be Boeing and Airbus.

Meanwhile, over 70%, or 1204 will be regional aircraft, with a total value of over 53 billion US dollars. This is the area where most of the aircraft manufacturers are competing fiercely. Companies like Bombardier from Canada, Embraer from Brazil and Fairchild Dornier from USA are the major players. Chinese manufacturers like China Aviation Industry Corporation I (AVIC I) and China Aviation Industry Corporation II (AVIC II) are also participating in this fight with their turbo liners and jet liners under design.

Brazilian Embraer, a successful model in the

regional aircraft manufacturing industry of developing countries, brought its ERJ170 (70 seats) and ERJ190 (108 seats) regional jetliners models to the exhibition, attracting great attention from both visitors and a number of Chinese airlines that are the potential buyers.

Canadian Bombardier established its position in the Chinese market earlier in the 1980s with Q8 turbo liners. The company has been quite successful in recent years with tens of its turbo liners and jet liners delivered to a number of Chinese airlines. Bombardier brought its newest CRJ900 model with the hope of finding more customers in China.

Fairchild Dornier, a US regional liner manufacturer delivered 18 of its 328JET regional liners to China's Hainan Airlines. The latter signed a new contract to buy another 21 328JET regional liners from the US manufacturer this year. And this time, Fairchild Dornier brought its new 728JET model to China.

AVIC I also presented its first regional jet liner-ARJ21. Besides, AVIC II presented its model currently under design, which contains 56-60 seats. The new model is a regional jet liner jointly developed by AVIC II and Fairchild Dornier.

## Foreign Medicines Granted Outlets in Two Years

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign medicine wholesales and retailing outlets will be allowed to set up in China from the year 2003. Beijing Today learnt from the "Seminar for Development of Foreign Medical Enterprises in China" held in Beijing last week.

"The most brilliant advantage will be the reducing of medicines which occupy more than 40 per cent of the retailing prices of medicines currently in China," said Mr. Li Hong, section chief of the State Economic and Trade Commission.

Most foreign medicine wholesale and

retailing agencies have integrated commodity logistic support, which greatly reduces the prices they charge.

Two conditions will be applied in approving the establishment of foreign medicine wholesale and retailing outlets. One is that foreign companies can only enter into China's market by means of joint ventures. Secondly, these foreign companies must have generated an annual sales volume of over 2 billion US dollars in the three years before their establishment in China. In addition, domestic companies for the joint ventures have to hold

total assets of over 50 million yuan one year before, and generate an annual sales volume of over 300 million yuan during the three years before. The Chinese partners have to hold a majority of shares in wholesale medicine joint ventures.

Over the past decade, the domestic medicine sales market has seen great changes with new wholesale and retail networks emerging. In general, a nationwide network of medicines sales has been set up, even though most of the players in this sector are far from being sophisticated, said Mr. Li.



Photo by Zhuang Jian



# Ladystreet Opens for Business

By Liu Jinmei / Sun Ming

On September 22, Ladystreet Exchange Plaza opened after a flood of advertising and publicity.

The plaza has done a brisk business in its first week. "Many people head for Ladystreet, and there are often traffic jams along here," a taxi driver complained, impatiently waiting among a long queue to move an inch forward.

Inside, the plaza is crowded with customers of all ages and nationalities. It specializes, not surprisingly, in goods for women; clothing, accessories, jewelry,

makeup and so on.

Liang Xiaomin, a professor of the economics department of Beijing Technology and Business, says that women generally are more fond of shopping than men, in addition, "Ladystreet" or Nurenjie in Chinese, has an appealing name.

Furthermore, the location of Ladystreet is an added advantage. The 30,000-square-meter plaza boasting 1,800 stands is close to the Lufthansa Center and Laitai Flower Street, both popular and busy shopping centers in Beijing.



## Model of World Trade Center, a Hot Scenic Spot

At Beijing's World Park, the scenic spot modeled on New York's World Trade Center is attracting more tourists than ever before. People stop here to have a close look at the towers or take photos in front of them. Most express their sorrow about the loss of the real grand towers in the September 11 terrorist attack.

(Liu Jinmei)  
Photo by Fan Jiwen

## Philippine President Writes to Young Journalists

### First Reply from an APEC Leader



Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo



The young journalists are very excited to receive a reply from Philippine President Arroyo

Photo by Jia Ting

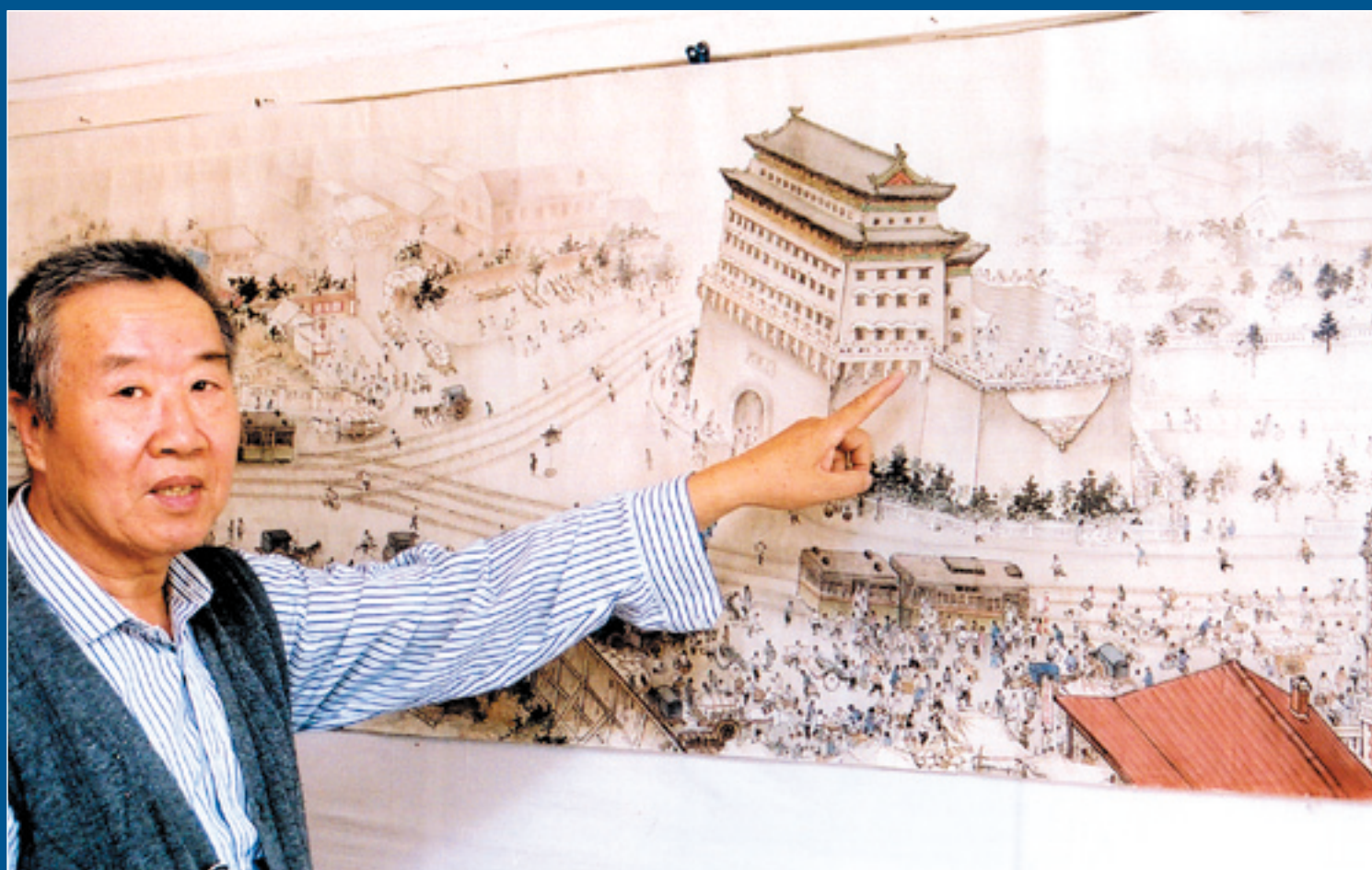
By Chang Hong / Sun Ming

Last Friday, five 10 to 12 year old young journalists from the *Beijing Children's Weekly* received a reply to a letter they had sent to Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. It is the first such reply to letters they sent the presidents of APEC member countries they have received.

Hearing that the 9th APEC Informal Summit Conference will be held in October in Shanghai, the *Beijing Children's weekly* organized some of its young journalists to write letters to the presidents of the member countries of APEC to ask some questions.

In mid-August, in order to deliver their letters to presidents, Jia Han, He Tiantian, Li Weijun, Jia Kezheng and Li Junwei came to these countries' embassies in Beijing. The first and second secretaries of some of the embassies, including those of the United States, Russia, and Chile, even welcomed them personally.

According to these young journalists, they are waiting for replies from the other countries' presidents.



Liu Hongkuan points to Qianmen on his 50-meter painting, *the Scene of Central Axis of Old Beijing*

Photo by Zhang Jizhou

# 50-meter Painting of Old Beijing

By Sun Ming

Liu Hongkuan, a local Beijing artist, recently finished a work named *the Scene of Central Axis of Old Beijing*. It took him five years to paint the more than 50-meter-long, 0.67-meter-wide picture, showing Beijing as it was in the 1930s and '40s.

According to Liu, the picture is so named because its background is the central axis of old Beijing, which ran almost eight kilometers from Yongdingmen, via Qianmen, Zijincheng, Zhonggulou, to Di'anmen.

Liu's picture realistically depicts the streetscape including the people, architecture, vehicles and so on. Peddlers, fortune tellers, vaudevillians and others are all engaged in their various activities. The picture is so realistic that many who have seen it mistook it for a photo taken during that period.

"The memories of childhood are the most profound," says 64-year-old Liu. He

says as a native Beijinger, he knows well the appearance of old Beijing. Besides, he lived in the vicinity of Qianmen for a long period, so he is especially familiar with the central axis of old Beijing. "Every little shop and workshop is still in my memory," he affirms.

Certainly Liu did not rely on memory alone to complete the picture. In order to recreate an authentic view of the Beijing of the '30s and '40s, he studied many reference materials, consulted with experts and visited many old citizens living in the area.

Liu says he first got the idea to paint the picture a long time ago, but didn't start work on it until 1996. He originally planned to complete the work within three years. However he later realized that the picture was much more complicated than he had anticipated.

"I was encouraged by many people during the past five years. Many friends

said that there are few people who could be competent enough to attempt such a work," says Liu. According to him, those artists who are younger than him are too young to have witnessed that time, while those who are older perhaps no longer have the energy to take on such a work.

"Old Beijing has lots of characteristic culture and folk-customs. And its vehicles, architectures and commerce are also distinctive. I hope people can learn about them from my picture."

Liu says he doesn't plan to part with the painting in the near future, despite offers by collectors and a gallery to purchase it. "I plan to paint another picture reflecting the new look of Beijing. It will be very meaningful to show them together in the future," says Liu. He plans to use Chang'an Avenue, the Avenue of Eternal Peace, as the background for the new painting.

## 21st Universiade Flying Saucer Returns to Earth

By Liu Jinmei

After the opening ceremony of the 21st Universiade, the flying saucer that had ignited the Universiade's main torch flew out of the arena and vanished. Last week, it was found safe and undamaged in a gingko plantation near a village in Daxing, a coun-

ty in South Beijing, after flying 75 kilometers from the Workers' Stadium.

Mr. Sun found the flying saucer while working in his 25-acre gingko plantation. The plantation has been named by Mr. Sun "the Olympic Woods" in the hope of making Beijing greener

by the time the 2008 Olympics are held. The flying saucer is so large that Mr. Sun cannot move it into his house, so he has put it in his courtyard. "When I carried it back home, many neighbors came over to have a look and thought it had been abandoned by aliens from out-

er space," Mr. Sun recalled excitedly. When asked what he planned to do with the flying saucer, he said, "A newspaper is offering a reward for it, so I managed to get in touch with them but without response. I think it should be collected as a cultural relic."

## Holiday Boosts Demand for Express Deliveries

With the holiday just around the corner, express companies in Beijing are busy delivering presents from companies to their clients.

*Beijing Youth Daily* found that the business of the two biggest express companies in Beijing are 4 to 5 times busier than usual, with most business coming from PR and ad companies. The most popular presents this year are still moon cakes, followed by handicrafts, flowers and fruits.

(Liu Jinmei / Sun Ming)

Photo by Baizi



## Beautiful Flowers Welcome the Holiday

In order to add more color to the National Day and Moon Festival holiday, Beijingers are dressing up their working units and other public places. Decorated with more than 300,000

pots of flowers, Tian'anmen Square has been transformed into an extravaganza of flowerbeds and belts.

The stereoscopic illumination system, including neon and radium lights

and the remote control technology for the fountains are both being used in the square for the first time.

(Liu Jinmei)  
Photo by Hu Jinxi



By Sun Ming

★ According to the research data from the Beijing Railroad Bureau, the number of railway passengers traveling to or from the city by rail will reach 1,600,000 per day during the National Day holiday. For the convenience of passengers, the bureau will schedule an extra 180 passenger trains over the period.

★ According to the management of many popular tourist attractions in Beijing, the price of entrance tickets will not increase during the holiday period.

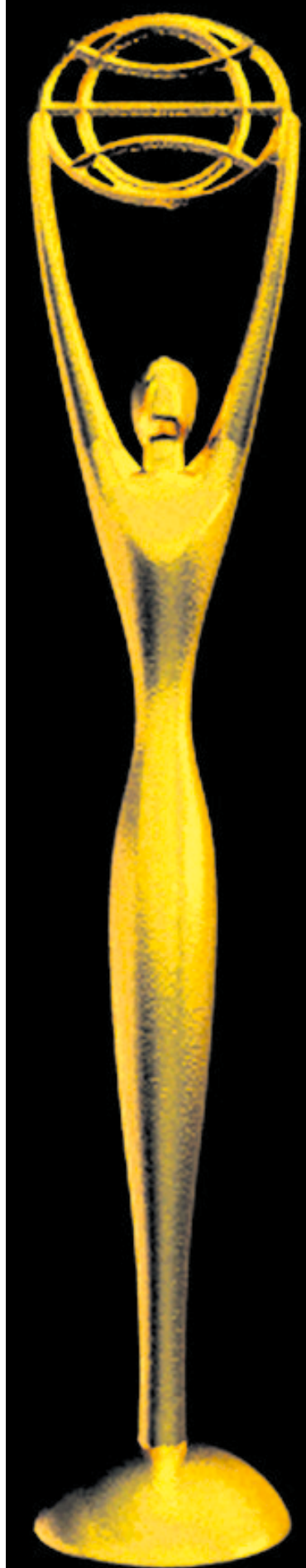
★ Beijing is to invest some 10 million yuan (approximately 1.21 million US dollars) in the coming three years to establish a quality control system for its computer software industry, according to sources with the Beijing Municipal Commission of Science and Technology.

★ According to a recent survey, the amount of money spent by most Beijing families on education ranks second, behind food.



The annual Clio Awards program is held in New York City in May each year. The Winners' Reel is sent to Clio representatives in 38 countries for further showings at foreign locations.

In ancient Greek mythology, legend has it that "Clio" was one of the nine muses. Clio was the historian to the ancient Greek Gods, and the recorder of great deeds through which she became the symbol and source of inspiration for those who sought to learn from the past and improve on history. Today, this ancient Greek muse serves the same purposes for the advertising world, as "Clio" is an internationally known symbol of excellence.



Craig Davis



Ding Junjie



Louis Wong

# When Will the World Appreciate Chinese Ads?

By Ivy Zhang

On September 21, Clio Awards AD Asia Show 2001 was held at the China World Hotel as part of a series of activities at the 2nd Beijing Chaoyang International Business Festival. Distinguished professionals in the advertising industry who also served in Clio Asian juries were present at the forum, delivering presentations and introducing hundreds of selected top-level advertising works to enthusiastic local audiences.

Craig Davis, Regional Creative Director Asia, Saatchi & Saatchi

It's worth noting that all over the world 90% of advertising is terrible. It treats audiences like morons, it jumps up and down and screams at people to get attention and it lacks any kind of emotional connection with the viewer. It's the same in China.

To me, advertising like that is a wasted opportunity and a waste of clients' money.

The real test of advertising is not whether it's better than the competitor's work, but whether it's better than the editorial and programme content surrounding it. If it's not, no one will even notice it.

Great advertising makes people laugh, cry or get interested to know more. It's that simple.

Having said that, there is some wonderful advertising in the top 10%. And what's great to see is that more and more of that work is coming from China.

There is a wonderful enthusiasm in the industry in China and a voracious appetite for learning. Young people here want to change the world. That's invaluable.

In the next few years I believe advertising in China, at the top end at least, can and will be amongst the world's best. That's very exciting and makes advertising a great business for young people in China to get into.

Currently there's a perception

that work from China doesn't get all the recognition it deserves in the major international award shows. To some extent that is true. Language does present a barrier to many, mostly English speaking juries. But I don't want to overblow that issue. Winning these awards from China is possible if you do great work, I think we've proven that a few times now.

The bigger challenge is to consistently generate bigger, better advertising ideas. That takes a huge amount of passion, energy and enthusiasm, all things that people in China have plenty of. That's why I am so optimistic about China's future.

and tourism.

Third, China's GNP has witnessed a growth rate of 3% equivalent to USD 30 billion. From 1979 to 2000, the advertising industry has grown 45% every year. However, there's still much space for further growth since per capita advertising fee is only USD 7 in China in contrast to USD 500 in USA.

Fourth, after China's entry into WTO, it is reported that 80% of American large companies are expected to surge into China, which brings both challenges and opportunities for China's advertising industry.

Louis Wong, Chairman & Executive Creative Director, Megacom Advertising Limited.



Beetle, Volkswagen—the Clio Gold Award Winner

Ding Junjie, Professor of Advertising Department, Beijing Broadcasting Institute

My comments center around how China's accession to WTO affects China's advertising development.

First of all, I'd like to state two incorrect viewpoints people usually hold regarding the influence WTO will have on China. WTO is still far away from China, and no major changes are expected in the sphere of advertising. Furthermore, China's entry into WTO this November will bring about earth-shattering changes.

First, the transparency principle will help promote the legal advertising market. Well-grounded regulations and laws will be implemented based on the Law of Advertisement, especially for cosmetics, cigarettes and medicine ads.

Second, with many industries opening further to foreign investors, investment in ads will greatly increase, for instance telecommunications, publication, audio and video products, education,

In terms of creative ideas, the gap between Chinese advertising and the world can be traced back to a number of reasons. The late opening of the Chinese mainland market means there is a lack of sound knowledge about marketing strategy and management. Advertising professionals don't perform well in balancing the relationship between creation and market strategy. Most of their ideas are lacking in well-grounded thinking. Supplementary services such as commercial photographing, film and TV production are not as good as expected. Appreciation levels of consumers, those based in remote areas in particular, are rather low, which drives the advertising industry to produce many shallow ads.

The prerequisite for Chinese advertising to win Clio awards is to overcome the barriers mentioned above. This is not a matter of one or two persons or creative professionals. It covers a full range of areas including advertising business owners, consumers' education level, media owners, talent training, and government supervision over the advertising industry. However, there's one point I want to emphasize and insist - creative professionals should focus on the origin and execution of their creative ideas.

## SOUND BITES

"There is clearly a chance of survival for well-introduced, traditional brands. The emotional link that people have, especially in food categories, is with traditional brands, not with the new ones. The more traditional it is, the stronger the link, regardless of the owner or the technology. It is precisely the combination of strong global brands and local product denominations that will make for the success of a food company."

—Francois Perroud, spokesman for Nestle, the world's biggest food company

"It's definitely the challenge. I'm not coming back for money, I'm not coming back for the glory. I think I left the game with that, but the challenge is what I truly love. I'm doing it for the love of the game, nothing else, for the love of the game."

—Basketball legend Michael Jordan talked about his possible comeback after a pickup game in Chicago. He will come out of retirement to play for the NBA's Washington Wizards, according to Monday's edition of the Washington Post

"I have a better understanding of housewives and mothers, about their pride and frustrations. And I have learned from experience that if a woman can solve the original problems and build harmonious relationships at home, she can cope with anything in the outside world. It's not political power nor money that defines one's success, but knowledge. These are the key elements for women to achieve success."

—Vivienne Poy, who was born in Hong Kong, is the only Asian to be appointed to the Senate of Canada

By Xiao Rong

# Let's Talk About Sex ... or Not

Adults debate the benefits of early sex education

By Xiao Rong

Unlike western countries, sexual education has long been a sensitive topic in China, especially for teenagers and young children. In the eyes of some educators or parents, it's not easy to teach children basic sexual knowledge in any natural way. The adults often feel embarrassed, and worry about misleading the children. A recent dispute about whether there should be separate lavatories for boys and girls in kindergarten has provoked debate among teachers, parents and experts as to the necessity of preschool sexual education. Here follow some of the opinions:

Ms. Wang Yongsheng, Teacher of Beijing No.2 Light Industry School: Up till now I have not fully realized the importance of sexual education to my child. I don't even know exactly whether boys and girls in kindergarten share the same lavatory. But as a matter

of fact, she sometimes does ask me those questions like "Where did I come from?" and "What's the difference between boys and girls?". Under such circumstances, I would always try to explain to her as simply as possible. We are now living in a more complex and open society that has exerted great influence on our children, including unfavorable influences. So I think it necessary to give them certain preschool lessons in sexual education. And only with the mutual effort of the kindergarten teacher, the parent and society at large, can our younger generation acquire some basic sexual knowledge in a safer way. In this way, it is important to discuss child sexual education, which has long been ignored by our parents.

Mr. Yang Bing, Beijing Xueyao-hong Jewelry Corporation: As far as I'm concerned, I don't

think it necessary to teach our kids about sex too early. They are so young that they cannot be said to have any consciousness of sex. As long as they can grow up freely and healthily, we adults should obey the laws of nature instead of forcing them to take notice of sex knowledge ahead of time. Anyway, children are children, they are too innocent to know the exact meaning of sexual difference.

Zhu Xiaoping, Director of Beijing No.3 Kindergarten:

First of all, different kindergartens have different circumstances in the case of having separate lavatories for young boys and girls. For those small kindergartens, it's impossible to build male and female toilets due to limited space. As for our kindergarten, which is one of the best in Beijing, certain measures have been taken to solve this problem. There are urinals for boys in the same toilet as girls, so

they can go to different sections. But as for those little children who cannot control themselves, they sometimes pass water outside the urinal. Second, even if we build male and female toilets, there are not enough teachers to look after the little kids who are unable to go to the toilet by themselves. Usually, one teacher has to take care of ten to twenty children, so it's more convenient for the teacher to look after the children if they go to the same lavatory at one time. In a word, every country has its own circumstances, we should not follow blindly what foreign countries do with regard to the sexual education of children.

Wu Yu'an, President of Tuanjieshu No.1 Kindergarten of Beijing:

In my more than ten years of teaching experience, children seldom show obvious curiosity toward the differences between male and female. Even if they do, it's not as

bad as some adults think it is. We can try to explain to them in a humorous and simple way. Children have their own way of thinking which needs our understanding, instead of misleading and caution. In my opinion, such a mysterious subject as sex should not be unveiled, otherwise there would be the totally adverse effect of arousing the much stronger curiosity of some children. So I don't agree with the suggestion of introducing sexual education as early as the period of childhood.

Gao Dewei, Professor of the Biology Department of the Capital Normal University:

The sexual consciousness of a human being actually begins as early as 2 or 3 years old. Generally speaking, children realize the difference between the external genital organs of male and female at the age of 3 or 4, and thus feel curious about the sexual organs of oth-

er children and adults, which can last until the age of 8 or 9 and consequently may lead to games and inquiries about sex. But these activities surrounding sex do not mean they form mature sexual notions in their mind. There are two significant periods for sexual education of a person, the period of 2 or 3 years of age being the first, while the period of puberty is another.

In Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, sexual education begins from kindergarten and continues until primary school, high school and university. Take Taiwan for example, there are plans for kindergarten sexual education, which are entitled "Get to know yourself". The teacher will teach the children about their bodies and the differences between male and female by means of pictures and games. In short, sexual education is a lifetime education that deserves an important status.



# Condom Vending Machines coming to a corner near you

## Local support, in words if not in deeds

When asked to give their views on the subject, local people over the age of twenty say it is very convenient and they would not care about who bought the condom at a pharmacy or through a selling machine.

Most say the installation of condom-selling machines will be an effective measure against the spread of AIDS.

However when questioned further, none would admit to having ever purchased condoms, either from a shop or a vending machine.

Those questioned also say that they are not concerned that it will lead to social problems, saying that people today are more aware of the importance of safe sex.

Some local teenagers look somewhat self-conscious when asked their opinion are unwilling to comment, as were some visitors to Beijing from other parts of China.

By Su Wei

In August 1999, 60 "Love Time" condom vending machines were installed in Beijing's Haidian District, as an experimental program organized by the United Nations Population Fund and the Family Planning Commission of Haidian District.

They were mainly distributed on the campuses of universities and colleges, around the entrances of supermarkets, community service stations and outside public toilets.

Two years later, more than 210,000 condoms have been sold through these vending machines.

Since the middle of September this year, Ailunsi Health-care Products has installed 100 "Strong Man" condom-vending machines in Haidian District.

The company will install a further 400 machines near the entrances of large shopping stores, such as Shuang'an department store, in the rest rooms of four and five star rated hotels and outside public toilets within the coming month.



## "Installation unlikely

### to be profitable in short term"

Ailunsi sales manager Wu Jiandong says the total cost of installing the condom vending machines will exceed 300,000 yuan, and will take eight years to recoup.

"Our General Manager is aware of the small profit, but he says we should take a long term view." Wu says according to their office in Shenzhen, there are more than 3,000 "Star Light" condom-vending machines in that city, so the 500 in Beijing is still a relatively small figure.

However, he also points out that the profit made by "Star Light" from its vending machines is quite small.

Wu says their products can easily be found in 98% of the pharmacies in Beijing, and their aim by sponsoring the program is try to do something to benefit society.

"It is common for some large companies to donate money to an association or a community. There are many ways for a company to further its development besides earning profits."

Wu points out the move provides an opportunity for the company to become a leader in the industry in Beijing, as no other companies here have undertaken such a large-scale installation.

"We are able to enter the market in Shenzhen and Shanghai, for people there are more open to accept new things, but such markets have already been taken by other companies."

Ailunsi is aiming to win a large share of the market in Beijing, and are planning to invest another 2 million-yuan for the installation of more machines.

Wu acknowledges that they have no choices in terms of selecting the locations for the installation of the machines, though they would prefer to install them in the busiest and most crowded commercial areas of Haidian. "The Family Planning Commission of Haidian first discussed the issue with each of the 16 neighbourhoods. The staff of the neighbourhood committees then conferred with the universities, supermarkets and so on. Finally we were informed of the decisions they had made regarding the locations." The exact location for the installation of the remaining machines will be decided by the relevant offices, with all machines due to be installed by the end of October.

Wu also points out that the fact that the machines only accept one yuan coins might inhibit sales, as many people do not like carrying coins. The company is currently trying to find a solution to this issue. He says if paper money could be used, the usage might increase.

## Ideal places for vending machines should be in stores

Site: Ganjiakou Da Sha

Time: Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

There is a "Strong Man" condom-selling machine beside one of the two public telephones in the first floor of the elevator lobby.

This area is the entry to the goods store area and the supermarket of Ganjiakou Da Sha, and the back door to the Da Sha shopping area. There are three elevators, one of which is right opposite the vending machine.

According to a security guard, maybe no more than three people have bought condoms from the machine in the past six days. He says those who have used the machine are generally local people in their 20s or 30s, and that most are women who buy condoms when the store is to close.

Within one and a half-hours, there are three purchasers. The first two are men aged 31 and 27 respectively. The first works for a company and the second in a government office. They have both bought condoms from vending machines in the past.

The younger man says although he doesn't mind being photographed, he is a little concerned that his family might say something to him.

The last one is a young woman of 25-26. She refused to be interviewed, although she did say that there is also a vending machine on the campus of her university, however she still prefers to buy them elsewhere.

Site: Beijing Post and Telecommunication University

Time: Monday from 9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

There is a condom-vending machine beside the university hospital. Within one hour, no one went to buy condoms although it is said that people generally buy condoms at night.

In order to find out if there were any potential buyers, the reporter decided to buy a condom. On approaching the machine, a young man shouted, "Do it bravely! Put a one yuan coin in". The man, in his early 20s had just finished studying in the library.

When asked why he shouted, he said he thought it strange that a girl was buying condoms. He said he had seldom seen anyone buying condoms from the vending machines, whether at day time or at night and he said the vending machines should not be seen as a service for the university students, but rather for the teachers and staff of the university.

北京青年报  
BEIJING TODAY  
今日北京

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# Rowing Regatta a Hit on Beijing's Waterways



Zachary Taylor, Cox of the Harvard team, names himself 游龙 meaning "Swimming Dragon" in Chinese

By Xiao Rong

The usual tranquility of Beijing's Kunyu River was disturbed last weekend by thousands of enthusiastic audience members cheering enthusiastically for the First Motorola International University Regatta 2001.

The first such sporting event of its kind in China, the regatta attracted teams from eight of the world's top universities; Oxford and Cambridge of Britain, Harvard and Yale of the United States, and China's Tsinghua, Peking, Fudan and Shanghai Communications Universities. They vied for the top honors on a six-kilometer stretch of Beijing's Kunyu River, one of the city's prettiest scenic routes linking the urban Yuyuantan Lake with the Summer Palace's Kunming Lake.

After a fierce competition, Yale, Tsinghua, and Harvard emerged to take the top three places.

## Teamwork Brings us together

Although there are only three top places for this regatta, the eight teams strove to achieve their best performance, rather than top ranking, and most of the teams succeeded in this regard. Mike Curi, leader of the Yale team, said at the press conference, "It's the most shining period in my life to be able to come to China for this regatta."

Zachary Taylor, from Harvard, mentioned the recent terrorist attack in the U.S. "The terror event will not overshadow the people of China, Britain and America who love world peace, only the peace will last forever."

Referring to the unique appeal of

rowing, most of the athletes spoke about the teamwork and the strong will that the sport demands. "I like the way the eight of us work together just like one person. You must be quite uniform and no divergence is permitted in this sport. Some may think this boring, but I think the uniformity just means a kind of beauty," said Eirik Lilledahl from Yale.

"Unlike other team sports such as basketball and soccer, which permit its players impromptu performances, rowing is quite the opposite. Even if you have your own ideas, you should follow the decision of the whole team. So it really needs your sacrifice sometimes," Zhu Zhe of Peking University told reporters.

As to the sacrifice of personalities, Dave Hutchins from Cambridge has his own thinking. "The sacrifice is to a certain extent important, but it doesn't mean that you do not have to use your mind during the competition. Instead, you need to keep alert and adjust yourself to the changing situation in time. In a word, not only the body but also the soul should have a perfect balance."

## Tradition and Innovation

According to a recently organized census by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), rowing is fifth most popular sport. This is mainly due to the sport's long history and the popularity of University regattas in Europe and America.

It is thought that rowing was originated from simple boating games in Europe in the 18th

century, while the regular competitions date from the extramural rowing competition between England's Oxford and Cambridge University in 1829. Since then, rowing competitions have become a traditional annual event on the Thames each year.

Compared with the long history and the great popularity of rowing in Europe and America, the sport is still quite new in China. But the Motorola International University Regatta 2001 has paved the road for the future popularity of the sport here. For most of the audience by the Kunyu River, the sport was not a newcomer, as an annual race between Tsinghua and Peking University in 1999.

"It's a kind of sport that is full of vigor and challenge for young people. And also it's a mixture of strength and honor. I just love the game," said a teacher from Tsinghua University who had taken his little son to watch the race.

Long tradition as it has, rowing still needs innovation and new development in China. He Zhenliang, IOC Executive Member and President of the Chinese Rowing Association told the press, "The 2008 Olympics are both an opportunity and a challenge, which needs more people to participate in and the all-round development of sports in China. As an Olympic sporting event, rowing is not so competitive in China, with the exception of women's lightweight scull. So besides lightweight scull, we should develop heavyweight scull both for the men's and women's events."



Row, row, row your boat...

Photos by Jackey

# Follow-Up on Terrorist Attacks in USA

## U.S. Bombers in Place at Overseas Locations

WASHINGTON, September 24 (Xinhua) -- U.S. Air Force B-52 and B-1 bombers were in place at undisclosed overseas locations Monday in support of an anti-terrorist campaign centered on Afghanistan, in which Saudi-born extremist Osama bin Laden was sheltered, defense officials said.

The United States has named bin Laden as the prime suspect in the September 11 hijacked airliner attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Defense Department building in Washington that left nearly 7,000 people dead or missing.

The terrorist attacks have triggered the U.S. military's biggest mobilization since the 1991 Gulf War.

## U.S. Detains 352 in Probe into Terror Attacks

WASHINGTON, September 24 (Xinhua) -- U.S. law enforcement agencies have detained 352 people in the investigation into the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., Attorney General John Ashcroft said Monday.

Testifying before the House Judiciary Committee, Ashcroft said that the Federal Bureau of Investigation wanted to detain 392 more people who remained at large and who may have helpful information in the probe.

## Bush Signs Order Freezing Terrorists' Assets

WASHINGTON, September 24 (Xinhua) -- U.S. President George W. Bush signed an executive order Monday immediately freezing the assets of 27 individuals and organizations in the country and prohibiting U.S. transactions with the 27 different entities.

Bush's executive order marked the first public step in Bush's declared war on terrorism on the financial front following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. Over 6,500 people were presumed dead in the attacks.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is deploying forces around the world in preparation for a military strike against exiled Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network.

## Taliban Warns U.S. of Bloody War

ISLAMABAD, September 24 (Xinhua) -- Supreme leader of Afghan Taliban Mullah Omar on Monday said in a statement that the United States will face a bloody war if it doesn't change its policy in the Middle East, according to a report by the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP).

Mullah Omar said the death of Osama bin Laden can not solve the problem. "Terrorism can only be eliminated if the United States withdraws its forces from the Middle East," he said.

## Taliban Fighters Ready to Fight Against U.S. Attacks

ISLAMABAD, September 24 (Xinhua) -- Taliban's Defense Minister Mullah Abi-

da on Monday said in Kabul that three hundred thousand experienced Taliban fighters have been deployed everywhere inside Afghanistan, who are ready to defend their country and religion from the anticipated U.S. military strikes, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said.

The minister appealed to the Afghan people to be ready for a Jihad or Holy War and fight for justice when necessary.

"We are trying to avoid a war and the United States should be patient, because the war is also dangerous for them," he said, adding "we are ready to defend our land and airspace in case of a war."

## U.S. Leading Economic Index Declines in August

NEW YORK, September 24 (Xinhua) -- The U.S. leading economic index declined 0.3 percent in August after increasing for several months, suggesting weakening conditions in the U.S. economy going into the end of the third quarter, a research group said Monday.

The Conference Board, one of the leading U.S. business research groups, said in a survey that its Composite Index of Leading Economic Indicators fell 0.3 points to 109.6 last month from a reading of 109.9 in July. This followed a 0.4 percent rise in July, a 0.2 percent increase in June, and a 0.6 percent gain in May.

"There was cautious optimism a month ago that manufacturing declines might have been bottoming out. Now, in the wake of the terrorist attacks, economic demand seems likely to slow. This would be especially reflected in the numbers on orders and housing permits, among other components in September," said Ken Goldstein, economist for the New York-based Conference Board.

The composite indexes are the key elements in an analytic system designed to signal peaks or troughs in the business cycle.

## Saudi Arabia Cuts Ties With Afghanistan's Taliban Regime

RIYADH, September 25 (Xinhua) -- Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic ties with Afghanistan's Taliban Regime Tuesday, leaving Pakistan as the only country to maintain diplomatic relations with it.

The Saudi government announced the decision in a statement, three days after the United Arab Emirates, under the mounting pressure from the United States, severed its ties with the Taliban.

## Russia to Provide Airspace for Cargo Plane, Assist anti-Taliban Forces

MOSCOW, September 24 (Xinhua) Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia is ready to offer its airspace for the planes carrying humanitarian cargoes to the anti-terrorist operation zone in Afghanistan.

Making a televised address to the nation, Putin said Russia will expand cooperation with the internationally recognized Afghan government of Rabbani and will give its armed forces additional assistance in the form of weapons supplies.



On Sep. 24, more than 100 peace lovers gathered in Calcutta, India, to express their concerns over the Sep. 11 Terrorist Attack in the USA and its consequences



# A Face in the Crowd

By Hu Xiaoli

**A**s women enter a teeming department store, they step into a paradise of fashion and good looks. Zhang Jinhong is a frequenter of one of these stores. Her eyes are not attracted by slinky dresses or sparkling jewelry however, but by potential customers for her business. "Yes, I am a cosmetician," she said in a firm tone. Nevertheless, she is more likely to describe herself as a beauty consultant.

Zhang, 23 years old, has been working in Mary Kay Cosmetic Company for a year. Her job is to attract women to attend her skin care appointments and buy the company's cosmetics. Every day she will face dozens of unknown women. "My challenge is just to face those strangers," she laughed.

## Cosmetician by Accident

"Actually, I had no interest in skin care or cosmetics at all," Zhang said in the company's beauty salon, surrounded by glamorous colleagues who were busy giving skin care to their respective customers.

Zhang once worked in a joint venture with a regular job and stable salary. But the oppressive atmosphere there changed her into a quiet, sensitive girl prone to self-abasement. She resigned at last, hoping to find a new job. "I met Mei in hospital by chance around that time," she told. As a Sales Director in Mary Kay, Mei advised Zhang to be a cosmetician after hearing she was looking for a job. "I declined," Zhang recalled, "because I thought it an unstable job and most importantly, I was not confident or beautiful enough to be a cosmetics saleswoman."

During the days at home, Mei called her several times, saying she could try it as a part time job first. With nothing else on the horizon, Zhang reluctantly went to Mary Kay's beauty salon to have a go. "It was just the atmosphere that appealed to me at first," Zhang recalled with a smile. As she stepped into the beauty salon that day, she found everyone confident and friendly. For the first time, Zhang began to entertain the possibility of seeing herself in this sociable role. She soon

went through the professional training, and became a qualified cosmetician. "Actually, I felt inferior because of the freckles on my face. I was doubtful if I could be a beauty consultant before critical customers," Zhang said. But with the short hair, smart clothes and confident smile, you would not believe what she was saying.

## Making a 'Stranger Appointment' for the First Time

According to Zhang, the most important thing in her job is to hold a skin-care appointment with a stranger. In her circles, this is called a 'stranger appointment'. However, many Chinese dodge unsolicited sales in public. They are more likely to buy products from shop assistants rather than salespersons. "I had the same opinion as others," she confessed.

"I will never forget the first day I tried to make a 'stranger appointment' on my own." That day, Zhang came to the second floor in a big department store advised by her supervisor, "I stood in the corner for two hours, not daring to approach a stranger." Seeing those women with smart clothes and elegant manner, she felt even more inferior. She also remembered the times she had refused cosmeticians before.

The girl worried that no one would talk to her. "I really wanted to quit at that moment," Zhang confessed. During that time, a seemingly kind woman passed by. Plucking up all her courage, Zhang went over, asking in a weak voice the lines she had recited many times in her heart. The woman stopped, but said she had no time. The first day, she talked with more than 20 women, although none accepted her 'stranger appointment.' "I was disappointed, but I still had the courage to approach strangers," Zhang said cheerfully.

A young girl of Zhang's age was proficiently giving a skin care class to a middle-aged woman. They were talking like two old friends. Zhang observed for a while, and said, "The first time I had an appointment with a customer was a sheer nightmare." At that time, Zhang's supervisor left early, leaving her to face the customer alone. The customer was a typical middle-aged woman, serious and fussy. As her hands became clammy, Zhang didn't dare to look directly at her customer. Using all her knowledge gained from the training lessons and books, she tried her best to answer the woman's questions. "I could see that woman was finally satisfied with my work although she didn't buy anything," Zhang said with big smile.

## Biggest Sense of Fulfillment

Zhang has done this job for nearly a year. "I couldn't believe I could do it for such a long time, but the fact is that I like this job more than before." By now, she has some regular customers.

Zhang's longest standing customer is an accountant. "I met her at a bus stop," she began cheerfully. Outside the big department stores, she would find any chance to talk with strangers. This woman was wearing an old-style dress, and looked weary and sallow. Zhang approached her, asking if she would like to have a skin care appointment. The woman refused it quickly but chatted with Zhang for a little while; she said she was too busy to care about her appearance because she had a busy job and family to look after. The woman did leave her phone number before she left however. Not wanting to give up so easily, Zhang called several times,

and the woman accepted at last. The skin care appointment was 5 o'clock in the afternoon, but lasted as long as 3 hours. After the class, they became friends. "We often have meals together. Now, she looks much younger and more confident than before, and I am very happy to see every change of hers," Zhang seemed very pleased with her work.

"I like to see women grow confident through appropriate skin care and make up," Zhang said. For some customers, Zhang has taken on the role of professional beauty consultant, rather than just a cosmetics saleswoman. "It is a kind of fulfillment to be regarded as a reliable beauty consultant."

## Growing up by Facing Strangers

Every day, Zhang talks to at least 40 strangers, but is refused by most of them. "I am hurt sometimes," she revealed. Once, Zhang saw an elegant lady passing by, so she approached, politely asked for a 'stranger appointment'. The woman turned and gave her an angry look. "I felt sad and upset at times like those," she recalled. Another time, she encouraged herself to talk to a poker-faced woman, and surprisingly, the woman was very kind and even accepted the appointment. "It always puts me in a good mood to meet kind strangers, even if they don't accept my appointment or buy any products," she added, "but most of the time, if you give a sincere smile to a stranger, you will get one back."

Zhang's happiest moment is to have an appointment with a friendly customer in the beauty salon. Sometimes, the customers can speak to a stranger more easily than they can to an acquaintance. "So what I do is counseling, providing a willing, listening ear. I deal with young people who are falling in and out of love, or with wives who have husbands and children. They may tell me some little tragedy or something. I am willing to try to feel the customer out." Many customers have become her good friends.

"Every stranger is a challenge for me. I grow up just by facing those strangers." The young girl spoke with great confidence and optimism. Several days ago, Zhang received a call from one of her school classmates. They hadn't contacted each other for nearly a year. "You've become very mature and poised after just one year," were the words from the other end of the line. For Zhang, working in Mary Kay Company is more than just business or a paycheck. It's a passion, a life style, and a way to grow up.

- ① Making a 'stranger appointment'
- ② At a skin care consultation session in the beauty salon
- ③ Keeping in touch with customers
- ④ Giving advice to customer about making up
- ⑤ Choosing socks with a friend

Photos by Zhuang Jian

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# Steering a Precious Flow of Music

**Music with a history of 550 years from Beijing's Zhihua Temple has retained many of the original musical elements from the Tang and Song dynasties. The true depths of this music can only be handed down from master to apprentice through the generations. With just two masters of the music remaining, both in their late seventies, there is a real danger of the music dying out...**

By Miao Yajie

The music of Zhihua Temple is an ancient form of music spreading throughout the temples of Beijing. It was initiated in Zhihua Temple 550 years ago. Flowing down 28 generations from a master to his disciples by oral instruction and rote learning, it is representative of Buddhist music in terms of formation, development, circulation, and religious influence. Meanwhile, its innumerable links with ancient folk music, opera music, and court music attest to its high historic, academic, and artistic value. Zhihua Temple music, along with Chenghuang Temple percussion and wind music of Xi'an, Daxiangguo Temple music of Kaifeng, Qinghuang Temple music of Wutai Mountain, and the Southern Tunes of Fujian, has been praised as an "intangible relic" and "living fossil".

The music is facing an uncertain future in such a rapidly changing society. As one of the most ancient existing music forms in China, it constitutes a national treasure. The old masters are all gone except two in their late 70's; the 28th generation after five years' training and performing left the temple in 1996. The destiny of the music in the new century is still uncertain.

## Initiation and Practice

Zhihua Temple, located in Lumicang, Dongcheng district, was built in the 8th year of the Zhengtong reign during the Ming Dynasty in 1443. It was originally established as the family temple of Wang Zhen, one of the most influential eunuchs of the Ming Court, and was later given the name "Zhihua Meditation Temple" by Emperor Yingzong. The temple is a fine example of Ming dynasty wooden architecture, and is famous for its tradition of Buddhist art as well as being a conservatory for "classical music of Beijing".

The monks in the Zhihua Temple have all concentrated on music since its establishment, rather than on the practice of Buddhist doctrines. Usually boys entered the temple beginning apprenticeships at the age of seven, and in any case no older than 13. They first learn how to read the scores, then the instru-

ments, and complete their initial study after seven years of hard work.

The music adapts a relatively confined, conservative, and strict teaching method: that of master to apprentice. The traditional Chinese *gongche* scores serve just as reference, because the most important elements of the piece, the improvisations, were all in the minds of the masters.

According to some monks, practice units were strictly made up of four-hour blocks. These sessions included practicing on one's knees for one hour, practicing while standing, walking, and sitting for one hour respectively. The four postures were to meet the demands for various occasions.

Apprentices follow the teaching of their masters without a single change generation after generation, thus keeping many of the original musical elements of the Tang and Song dynasties in terms of the instruments, repertoire and performing skills.

However, due to conservative ideas, the master tended not to lay all his cards on the table, which directly led to the contracting of the repertoire. The existing scores have a total number of over 130 tunes. Benxing, the 79-year-old 26th successor, can only play about 30 pieces.

## Renaissance and Dormancy

The Zhihua Temple music was a happy surprise to Buddhist circles and the world of music when scores were found in 1952. Before then, practitioners of Japan's gagaku had long been proud of their ancient instruments from the Tang Dynasty of China, such as *sheng* (reed pipe with 17 bamboo tubes), and *guan* (wind instrument with nine holes). It was even said that if Chinese wanted to see China's ancient musical instruments, they should go to Japan. The discovery of the Zhihua Temple music ended the embarrassing situation.

The musician monks in the temple resumed secular life after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The silence of the Zhihua Temple was broken 30 years later, in the 1980s, when the former monks were summoned back to the temple in or-



Benxing, top center, is the only remaining musician monk from this 1986 group photo

Photo provided by Ling Haicheng

der to rescue the national treasure. They were invited to perform in concert halls and music institutes at home and abroad. The performances were recorded in audio and video forms. Then professors from China's Central Conservatory of Music translated the scores into numbered musical notation and learned to play the music by themselves.

In 1991, six young men from the 'county of music', Gu'an county in Hebei province, were recruited to learn the Zhihua Temple music. Five years later they left the temple in succession for marriage and better paid jobs.

After more than 15 years renaissance, the ancient music became dormant again, according to Ling Haicheng, senior researcher on Zhihua Temple music and scholar of Buddhist culture. The urgency lies in the preservation of the original, authentic music. There are two living masters, one is 26th generation Benxing as mentioned above, and the other is 27th generation Fuguang who is very sick in bed. The responsibility to keep the music as authentic as it used to be goes without a doubt to Benxing.

The nearly 80-year-old Benxing, quick and clear minded, is good at reading the *gongche* scores. He started his apprenticeship in Zhihua Temple at the age of 12. His instrument is flute, while he can also play chiming gongs and drum. Benxing said that he is willing to teach more apprentices, but who wants to learn?

## Strategies for Rescue

As an organizer of the first China Buddhism Music Ensemble, and promoter of Zhihua Temple music, Ling Haicheng has gained great experience over the past 20 years. "The most ideal people are those who love the music and are willing to be real monks, not only musician monks. They will have to study the music, practice Buddhism, and attend other Buddhist activities. They must have the commitment to worship Buddha with the preservation of the music," said Ling firmly.

A useful analogy is Japan's gagaku. Few young Japanese have the patience to appreciate gagaku, but they all know it is a national treasure of Japan. The Japanese government allocates funds to preserve it and pass it on generation after generation. As a symbol of their national treasure, gagaku is performed for visiting world leaders at the most formal occasions. Culturally and economically, gagaku is treated as a national treasure.

Actually for the time being, funds for the second 'renaissance' of the Zhihua Temple music are not a problem. The Poloarts Cultural Transmission Corporation has worked out a complete set of schemes, with the first wave of investment at 1.2 million yuan. Basically they would like to have a ten-year contract with the temple, renting it out as a base for daily performance of the music. They also hope to recruit two groups of performers, altogether 18 people,

then train them and sign contracts with them. Other plans include bringing out a CD and DVD, making a documentary film, and publishing a picture album of the music and Buddhist culture of the Zhihua Temple.

## Time Is Running Out

When Benxing leaves the world someday, he will take away an important part of our heritage, "the most lively part of it," stressed Ling. "Benxing is very good at chanting the scores; it is a piece of learning. If an individual is able to chant the scores, then he will be able to play the music. Besides, his thinking and way of living are all part of the culture, if he dies, all those will disappear with him."

For more than five centuries, Zhihua Temple has survived several critical blows, such as the death of Wang Zhen in 1449, the destruction of Wang's memorial hall, his statue, and the tablets in 1743, and the selling of the elaborate caisson ceiling to the Americans in the 1930's. The music has proved even more enduring.

Now with the popularity of Buddhist culture, capital for religious activities is abundant. Indeed donations of several hundred million yuan for a temple or Buddha statue are not news in recent years. If we lose such intangible, irreplaceable heritage in this flourishing age, and look on helplessly at its return to zero after 550 years of vicissitude, it will be too late to say the loss is irreparable.



Scores copied by Benxing

Photo by Chen Shuyi

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# Vision of the Road to Pilgrimage

By Zhai Yongming

"A life without introspect is valueless." That is a motto often used by Zhou Guoping for self-analogy and self-encouragement. In his essays, philosophization has always been a predominant style: he is trying to use a metaphysical insight to reflect on many problems, so as to make thinking more powerful, life more meaningful and his essays more profound. It may be said to have reached its acme in Zhou Guoping's new collection of essays, *Different Roads to Pilgrimage*.

Speaking from the viewpoint of a scholar, Zhou Guoping is not a person who only faces the ultimate questions, either, for he also pays great attention to many problems in daily life, which has been clearly shown in his *Different Roads to Pilgrimage*. At the same time, he has also kept such an attitude: subliming these problems to the level of philosophy of life and making emotional communication with the reader while probing into such problems. In other words, he is talking about problems of life with a philosophic flavor.

It is said that Zhou Guoping's essays are very much favored by female readers, and I think, that has much to do with his liking for making affective communication with the reader. Such an attitude has set him to an equal footing with his readers. For modern people whose soul is becoming more and more closed to the world, emotional intercourse is no easy matter, almost becoming a luxury. Now we have a writer who can express freely and thoroughly what is in everyone's mind and yet not in everyone's words, hence, naturally, he will win emotional resonance from readers, especially female readers.

When writing *Different Roads to Pilgrimage*, Zhou Guoping was already over fifty, but, strange to say, his writing is so easy and leisurely, revealing a very young mentality. It may be attributed to his long years' indulgence in ancient Greek philosophy. That era was mankind's adolescence: healthy, forward looking and optimistic, people had not yet experienced war and other unexpected sufferings, and they had the curiosity to probe into the very bottom of everything. With a young mentality, chatting about such pollution-free metaphysical concepts as philosophy, monument, eternity, belief, spirit, yearning, solitude, soul and so on, has become a bygone myth hard to recover for most people nowadays.

Of course, in such a time, in a society where commercialization dominates everything, people like Zhou Guoping who have still keeps a young heart and idealism are not few, either. They are all walking on their own roads to Pilgrimage.

*Different Roads to Pilgrimage* is a collection of essays by Zhou Guoping and most of them are his reflections in reading.

Just as the author says: It seems that he has got acquainted with many different pilgrims, each of them is on his own pilgrimage, their ways are not necessarily the same, and cannot be the same, either. Here we have an excerpt of the book under the title of *Pleasure Is the Primary Standard*.

From Editor



Photoby Zhuang Jian

## Pleasure Is the Primary Standard

By Zhou Guoping

As I have spent my better half of life in reading, if I am asked, "what is your standard for choosing a book?" I would answer off the cuff: Pleasure is the primary standard. I would rather not read a book if it cannot make me feel delighted no matter how important it is claimed to be by the experts or how well it sells on the best-seller list.

People do things either for benefit, or out of temperament. When you are doing something for benefit, naturally, you will not care too much whether it is pleasant or not. I often see a master sportsman in Vanity Fair keeps complaining about his great sufferings but still keeps struggling, which is quite understandable to me. I do not think their complaints are unreal, because I know benefit is a coercive force, and, so far as the nature of what they are doing is concerned, benefit is more important than pleasure. In contrast, in a thing done out of your temperament, that is, only for satisfaction of your soul, pleasure will be the basic criterion. What belongs to this category is not only reading, but writing, artistic creation, appreciation of arts, friend making, love affairs, benefaction, and so on: in short, all spiritual activities. If you do not feel pleased when doing any of those things, we must wonder whether there is a utilitarian force acting in it, making them degenerate from a life of temperament into an act of utilitarian behavior.

Reading only for pleasure is a very lofty state of mind. Speaking on such a state, Tao Yuanming has given an excellent description: "I like reading, but do not try to understand everything in the book. Whenever I have understood something by chance, I will be so glad as to forget eating." But, do not forget another sentence in the biography of Tao Yuanming: "Remaining idle and silent, admiring no honor or benefit." Thus, to read books out of temperament, you must have real taste as a precondition. For those restless people eager to offer comments on everything, those honor and benefit seekers, those boasting of their ability to understand the essence and their mastery of the truth, how can they be at ease with such a self-knowing state?

Taking pleasure as the basic criterion is also an honest attitude in read-

ing. Whatever the book is, only when you have felt pleasure, resonance and enjoyment from reading it should you have the right to admit that it is a good book to you. At this point, just as Maugham put it, "Only you yourself are the final judge of the value of the book you are reading." Especially literary works, they do not have practical value themselves, but only can make your life fuller.

However, to realize that, first of all, you must like to read them. No one is amenable to read poetry, novels or essays. Even if it is a masterpiece praised in unison by experts, it has nothing to do with you if you are not interested in it. If you read it without interest, you will only pretend to know what you do not know and parrot what others say.

On the contrary, according to my observation, those who really take reading as enjoyment are often able to air their views frankly. For example, Montaigne was bold enough to reprehend Plato's *Dialogue* and Cicero's works as prolix and dragging, frankly admitting that he could not appreciate them; Borges even called Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Goethe's *Faust* as the most famous ways to cause boredom, and declared that inexplicability of Joyce's writings is just where the author's failure lies. Both of them were writers of the scholarly type, and no one can doubt their erudition.

Of course, we do not need to agree with their specific opinions on those works, what I intend to say using the examples is only that, people taking reading as pleasure must have clear likes and dislikes of their own, and are broad-minded, do not deign to hide their thinking.

I do not deny that reading is not necessary only for pleasure, and reading out of benefit also has its reason of existence, for instance, students' study and scholars' research. On the other hand, I also believe pleasant reading must take up a great position among good students and good scholars. I believe too that, in comparison with infusion of knowledge, protection and cultivation of the pleasure of reading is the more important task in education.

Hence, if an education fails to let students taste and enjoy the pleasure of reading but only makes them regard reading as a completely bitter matter, we may certainly judge that it is an unsuccessful one.

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## Chinese Rock Needs Stage to Spring Off

By Zhu Lin

**T**hunderous cheers brought the First National Rock Music Competition on September 19 at the Capital Stadium to a crashing end. "The passion of youth is very precious, but it's far from enough to just have passion," said Jin Zhaojun, chairman of the jury referring to the candidates in the competition. Once the strings and metal came to rest, the previously electric atmosphere gave way to reflection on Chinese rock music.

The candidate bands' biggest flaw is a lack of technique, both in composing and performing. A band

called "Big Apple" had fresh ideas, but didn't have the technique to express them. Exciting rhythm appears in the rap of "CMCB", the second prizewinner, but it failed to develop, and soon collapsed into repetition. Many singers shrieked

without vocal technique, and were unable to work together with the bands. No matter how loud performers cried, the audience was unmoved.

Fans thus came away with a strong feeling of

"Convenient shop", the first prize winner of the competition provided is on show

Photo provided by Du Wei

incompleteness. "It's generally hard to find one band with mature technique," Jin commented. Zhang Youdai, one of the best DJs in Beijing, has similar feelings concerning the present condition of rock music in China, "People in the bands listen too little. If they often listened to world ranking rock music, they would have known how far they have been left behind."

This thorny period in Chinese rock should be attributed to its lack of a stage, say Zhang Youdai and Jin Zhaojun. The singers, mostly born in the 1980s, do not have opportunities to show their talent and compete with each other. This first national rock gala might therefore prove to be the beginning of

Chinese rock's leap to true discordant art.

## Patriotic Arias Reawake Opera



Photo by Cui Jian

By Zhu Lin

**"T**ragic Dawn" staged on September 21 to 26 at Tianqiao Theatre was the first opera written by a Chinese composer and director after a period of ten years. It's been in the making for four years.

The story tells about a group of college students' patriotic dedication in the 1940s just before China's liberation. The story vividly reflects young people's state of mind at that time. The actors and actresses such as Peng Liyuan, Sun Liying, Han Yanwen and Sun Jian are all high-ranking singers in China. They combine the Chinese folk way of singing into opera singing, and made the Chinese audience feel closer to the opera.

The composer Guan Xia, who is the composer of the opening ceremony of the 21st Universiade, has written an article of twenty thousand words to explain his thinking in composing the music. "It's really a great challenge for me to write it," Guan says.

Besides the success of the opera, what counts more is the step forward it represents after a silence of so many years. Hopefully, some valuable experience has been accumulated for the real dawn of Chinese opera.

## Carmen in Flamenco Flurry

By Wang Baoling

**W**ith high expectations from both the audience and media, a Flamenco version of Carmen whirled across the stage of the Beijing Centre Theater for the first time in Beijing from September 24 to 26.

As the representative work of

the Flamenco ballet group, the exotic, lively Carmen presented by Flamenco Vivo Santa Troup aroused passion among Beijing dance lovers. The audience generously extended a bravo of 15 minutes to the excellent performance of the dancers.

Flamenco is unique on the art stage of the world, combining

the glory of Europe dance, the passion of Africa and the unique spirit of the Spanish. Flamenco still deserves its fame, though it has changed a lot in the past years.

Photo by Chen Shuyi



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On the morning of September 23, Ping'an Avenue was decked out in splendid festival attire. Locals and visitors came out in force to watch the passing parade of overseas artists taking part in the 4th Beijing International Cultural Tourism Festival.

A performing group from Switzerland led the parade, and the sounds of laughter and happy music soon filled the air. The artists seemed to enjoy themselves just as much as the audience, shaking hands and posing for photos with people in the crowd.

Some people described the event as "sitting in Beijing, watching the whole world."

The morning was filled with fascinating stories and wonderful performances. The following are a selected few we want to share with our readers.

# Drums Music & Laughter Launch Festival



Comic Orchestra L'os Clodos

Photos by Baizi / Wei Tong



Beatles on stilts

## Drumming Performances

By Jiang Zhong

Drums are great tools for coloring the atmosphere at a festival. On this occasion, they played a key role.

30 performers from Qinghai Province gave a Tibetan drumming performance. The drum played by the boys is called Longgu, while the girls play Reba. The drums represent blessing and good luck in Tibet. The performers wave the drum in the air with one hand, while beating it with a hook-like drumstick held in the other hand.

The drum of the Wa people resembles a log of wood, retaining the original color and texture of the bark. Their dance is reminiscent of the scene of an ancient battlefield or hunt; performers shake their heads, beat their drums violently and move around swiftly, as if fighting a wild animal.

The Jicheng Huagu (Flower Drum) of Shanxi Province is renowned for its great power. The performers beat the drums strapped to their forehead, neck, arms and thighs, even their ankles. They dress in the yellow garments of the Taipingtianguo (a famous rebellion that occurred during the Qing Dynasty), so the performance is also called Taipinggu, or Peace Drum.

The thinnest drum you could find in the parade is the Tianshuixuangu (the Heaven and Water Rotating) from Gansu Province.

The parade finished with a porcelain drum performance. These drums are made in Jingdezhen, China's most renowned porcelain production base. The ringing of the drums was a very different sound from that of the wooden drums, high, pure and clear.

Drums were undoubtedly the highlight of the parade. Each elegant pose or gesture by the performers won enthusiastic applause. The drum will bring blessings and peace to all the people of the world.



## Seeing double

By Wang Dandan

57 pairs of twins take part in the parade. All are from Beijing, ranging in age from just 8 months to 70 years old. Sitting in traditional rickshaws, once one of the most common modes of transport in China, they pass slowly along Ping'an Avenue.

The balloons hanging in front of the group feature two Chinese characters: Shuang and Dui, meaning twins. There are identical twins, fraternal twins, twin sisters, twin brothers, and twins of the opposite sex. Each twin holds a colored balloon, red for the elder and yellow for the younger.

## Flag Throwing from Belgium

By Li Dan

Alkuone, a Belgian flag-waving troupe comprises of two sections; one drums and plays musical instruments, the other waves and throws flags. They throw their flags high into the air, to be caught by themselves, or one of their pals. The audience shout their appreciation when those flags fly out and curve in the sky.

Most of the performers are teenagers. Flag waving and throwing is a very popular activity in Europe. It dates back to the Middle Ages, a time of frequent wars in Europe. Armies use to wave and throw military flags to celebrate victory. But the present flag waving merges with a joyous carnival sense. Each flag weighs 5 kilograms, and there is a lion on each, symbolizing strength and unity. Alkuone has been invited to many countries to give performances.



## Budding Martial Artists

By Li Dan

As the saying goes, the best is usually kept till last. The final performance presents traditional Chinese martial arts by the China Wushu School, Laizhou, Shandong Province. Each of these talented children display their extraordinary martial skills with a loud shout. Barehanded boxing, the wielding of weapons, combat and other collective performances, there is simply too much going on for the eye to take it all in.

Among the troupe, three young kids, only 4 or 5 years old attract people's attention. Dongdong gives an exhibition of Zuquan (the Drunkard Boxing), while the other two, Yangyang and Mengmeng do Tanglangquan (the Mantis Boxing). You may wonder how

such little kids can give such a mature martial arts performance. When asked what he will do when he grows up, Dongdong answers, "I want to be a world champion!"

## Lumbukut - Finland

By Wang Dandan

A slip of rainbow is moving toward us; red, yellow, green and blue, creates a mixture of the most beautiful colors on the avenue. It is in fact, four pretty young women from Lumbukut, Finland, doing the Samba.

The Samba is the most popular dance in Brazil's Mardi Gras, and is very different from any eastern style of dancing; however, this does not prevent the Chinese audience from cheering enthusiastically. With their long hair and pretty make-up, they easily become the focus of attention for the spectators.



## Gorgeous Italian Court Costumes

By Jiao Pei

Living Venice Carnival from Italy is the only troupe that just wins applause for their magnificent robes. The costumes date back to the Middle Ages, replica of those worn by Italian nobles. The feathers in their hats are from the bird, Fagiano, which represents freedom. One of the women in the group wears a black gauze veil. She explains that women at that time often went to dances with their faces concealed by a veil, allowing them to change their dancing partners without being recognized. Their Chinese tour guide, Liu, has dressed up to join the parade, as they are short a male performer. He blends in so well that most people haven't found there is a Chinese among those Italians. Their dress brings to mind the splendour of Italian culture.



## Exciting Ethnic Dance from Wa Minority

By Jiao Pei

Many of China's minority nationalities are participating in the parade, displaying their

special songs and dances with great passion. The Wa minority, from Lincang, in Yunnan Province, performs the traditional Wood Drum Dance. The pretty girls' black hair is so long, it attracts many comments.

During their performance, the boys beat a special wooden drum, which looks like a thick stick with holes in it. The sound it creates is deep and resonant; in contrast to the exciting dance the girls perform, swinging their hair wildly. Tourists are truly excited to experience this authentic dance from southern China right here in Beijing.



## Beatles on stilts

By Jiao Pei

Britain's Pearshape Performance Troupe is one of the two overseas troupes to join the Beijing International Cultural Tourism Festival for the second time. The four performers, all on stilts, are dressed up as the Beatles, as they appear on the cover of the 1967 album, Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. They are very friendly, constantly bending down to shake hands with people in the audience. At last year's parade, they all dressed up as Elvis Presley.

Before arriving at the main rostrum, one of the performers falls down. Firmly attached to his stilts, he is quite unable to stand up again unaided. However many audience members rush to lend a hand, and he is soon back on his feet, or rather stilts, again. As they pass by the rostrum, they dance on their stilts to the music, "We're Sergeant Pepper's lonely heart's club band, we hope you will enjoy the show", and "All you need is love".

## Swiss Comical Orchestra

By Li Dan

Swiss comic orchestra L'os Clodos was originally scheduled to be the 31st troupe of the parade. Their performance drew such a response during the rehearsal however, they were moved up to No.1 position for the opening day parade.

While performing their delightful music, all of the orchestra members jump and dance and shake from side to side, pulling funny expressions and making unexpected and hilarious gestures. The director Danielle Guerin resembles a fairy or pixie, jumping all over the place with great excitement, while somehow still managing to keep the correct tempo. Many people in the audience couldn't help but burst into laughter at her antics, dancing along with the rhythm of the music.

Definitely, the 44-member Lo's Clodos has become one of the superstars of this Festival.





A Frenchman joins a group of traditional Chinese dancers

Photos by Jackey / Wei Tong / Chen Shuyi

## A Regular Visitor

By Wang Dandan

I saw a gray-haired grandpa sitting on my right, whom I took to be an actor from Mongolia or somewhere, but was surprised to see him taking photos during the whole performance.

He is an American-Chinese and has come all the way from San Francisco to attend this festival. His name is Huang Qiang, he is 71 years old and used to be a mechanical engineer. He told me that he has attended every festival since the first one in 1998.

"Though my home is far away, I can enjoy the performances from all over the world and it is worth coming", said Huang. Having been away from China for 18 years, Huang also takes this chance as a cherished opportunity to greet old friends.

By attending and photographing the festival, Huang is doing his part to help the friendship between China and the rest of the world, and it surely reflects the fact that Chinese people, no matter where they are living, are eager to introduce China to the outside world.

## Simple but Stirring Maori Artists

By Jiao Pei

Te Rapaki Whanau Dance Troupe from New Zealand are all Maoris, the original inhabitants of New Zealand. Maori people live mainly in the central part of New Zealand. They have kept their traditional culture, and are called born artists, especially in music and dance.

They are very warm-hearted; when we took the cable car to look around Yanqihu Lake, the compartment was only big enough for 6 people. But they insisted on asking the photographer and me to join them. So after we sat down, none of us could move!

When they had changed into their costumes and were waiting to begin their performance, they gathered around the fountain and stretched out their hands to the water, a gesture that symbolized their determination to give a successful performance.



## Great Dancing Get-together

By Wang Dandan

You might be familiar with those official artists on the stage, with fixed expression and well-worn gestures; however the performance given by folk artists from China and abroad in Daying Village, Tongzhou District, was something quite different, delivered with warmth and enthusiasm. The artists even got down off the stage and danced together with members of the audience! There were no country barriers, no restrictions at all. People from Pakistan, the Philippines, Mongolia, U.K. and France, together with Chinese people, sang and played together regardless of language barriers.

Joye Jona, a singer from Pakistan was so happy to dance with a French woman from the audience that he kept singing for four songs, breaking the time record of individual performance delivered on that day. He does not understand any French, nor did she know a word of Urdu, but they cooperated in a very harmonious rhythm, giving rise to the climax of the performance.



It was a hot day, and sweat ran down Joye's face; however, the atmosphere on the stage was even hotter, as Joye and his fellow singers from Pakistan had a way of expressing their happiness that the audience found quite infectious.

Curtain call after curtain call was called for, before the singers finally made their exit. Their performance was a great hit with the audience, and many were reluctant to let them leave. Both locals and visitors hope to be here again next year for another such happy gathering.



## Western Costumes in Chinese Temple

By Li Dan

Among all the visiting troupes, Italy's Venice carnival troupe has perhaps the most splendid costumes. The troupe all dress in traditional Italian court clothes, which can be traced back to the 7th century.

It is wonderful to see these Italian gentlemen and ladies dressed up so gorgeously and solemnly, strolling around the ancient Tanzi Temple. They always have to be careful not to trip over the long robes. Although the clothes restrict their movements, they all showed a great interest in Chinese temple and Buddhist culture. Some prayed to Buddha, some were bargaining in the antique shop, while others tried to chat with the monks using sign language. A troupe member, Giuseppe said that he's a collector of Buddhas, and has 500 different types of Buddha statues.

Just imagine that so many western "nobles" talking and laugh loudly and freely in a Chinese temple and taking photos at the temple gate...

## Fruit picking for fun

By Jiao Pei

After all eight groups had finished their performance at Yanqihu Lake, they gathered at an orchard to pick apples. The occasion abounded with smiles and the happiness of harvest in Beijing's golden autumn. Everyone received a lovely small basket, and quickly dispersed in all directions.

Those Greek boys were particularly active, some of them climbing trees to throw the apples down to their fellows waiting below. The 14-year-old Maori boy from New Zealand, Tiakiawa cooperated with a Belgian girl. The Belgium boys and girls were very lively. While one boy shook the branches of a tree, eight girls stood around, holding up their baskets to catch the falling apples, a method of apple harvesting that gave rise to much hilarity.

After a while, everyone's baskets were full of delicious looking apples, and some couldn't resist eating one or two on the spot. Though the apples are not very big, they are certainly very tasty. All the artists were happy to have such a lovely souvenir from the apple orchard.



On the second day of the festival, three groups of overseas artists gave performances in the countryside around Beijing. They went to the oldest temple in Beijing, Tanzi, the picturesque Yanqihu Lake in Huairou County and Daying Village in Tongzhou District where local people gave the visitors the warmest of welcomes. They also visited Tanzhesi Middle School, had a class in Chinese calligraphy and went fruit picking in an orchard. The overseas and Chinese folk troupes gave wonderful performances together, and in spite of the language barriers, the whole day was filled with joyous and friendly chats, smiles and hugs.



Crazy shout from Vanuatu

## A Hawaiian Girl Teniu

By Li Dan

It's Tenneille's first visit to China. She's excited and enjoys the music all the way on the bus to the Tanzi Temple. Tenneille comes from Hawaii and her dance troupe, Hula-hula brings the most charming smile to the festival.

Tenneille is a student at Brigham Young University, studying social work. She's now working at the Polynesian Culture Center as a dancer to earn money to attend school. "I gave Tenneille a Chinese name; Teniu, meaning a special young girl. Like other troupe members, she's very lovely", said the bus driver with a smile. It seems the

21-year-old likes her new name very much. On the bus she couldn't help singing and moving along with the music, and also imitated the tour guide's way of talking through the microphone from time to time. "Oh Teniu!" we all couldn't help but laugh!

"Where is the place to change US\$ to RMB?" Teniu asked me urgently when we were visiting Tanzi Temple. Teniu and another Hawaiian girl had met several monks in the temple and they gave the girls a bag of chestnuts as a gift. Teniu offered them several US\$ in return, but was friendly refused. "Oh, I think I should go to change some RMBs, where is the place?" says Teniu anxiously.

The afternoon performances in Tanzhesi Middle School were the climax of the day's activities. There was living Venice carnival, Vanuatu aboriginal dance, Finnish oriental dance, and more. Teniu and her pals dressed in traditional Hawaiian shirts and with leis around their necks. She must enjoy most the sweet moment each time when the music comes out, when they start to dance and smile...

When the performances finished and all the artists were ready to leave, the Hawaiian leader came to ask "Where is Teniu?" She was found among the school children, busy shaking hands, making gestures and hugging them. Those children felt so close with Hawaiian sense and all smiled cheerily, a cue for several photographers to start snapping. "I'm sure your picture will be in many newspapers tomorrow." I joked with her. "I'm so happy to see so many lovely children, it's a Hawaiian tradition to appreciate people's attention to our performances. As for those children, whether one day they'll go out of China or not, they might remember that they have held hands and hugged someone from Hawaii when they were young...and I'm so proud of our culture."





On the third day of the festival, activities were held in various locations around town, such as World Park, Capital Steelworks Kindergarten and Fangzhuang Fire Brigade Center. The Brits are so happy to be allowed to touch "Stonehenge" in the World Park. Others happily play games with children in the kindergarten, while at the fire station, an artist from the Philippines takes the chance to dress up as a real fireman. Everyone collects many happy memories, which they will take home with them and cherish for many years to come.



Photo by Wei Tong

## I Can Touch It In China

By Jiao Pei

Pearshape from U.K have already become a familiar sight around town, with their creative performance and friendly attitude, towering over ordinary people on their stilts. In the World Park, Nyall Thompson, who plays the role of John Lennon, had the opportunity to practice his bargaining skills. Before he came to China, he had heard that prices can be greatly reduced in markets with a little bargaining. So he bought an orange-colored oilpaper umbrella for only 8 yuan, but the original price was 50 yuan!

After the performance, all the artists got on electric locomotives to take a look at the park. The most famous scenes and architectures from around the world are reproduced here. When they passed a piece of scenery of their own countries, the artists showed great excitement! When they saw "Stonehenge", two of the "Beatles", Nyall and Chris jumped off the car and ran crazily over, both stretching out their hands to touch it. Then they shouted and looked extremely excited. Some of us were confused with this unexpected display. Nyall explained to me that in Britain, no one is allowed to touch the real Stonehenge, it is protected by steel railings around the outside. Some people climb over the railings and try to touch it. However, the result of such action is being arrested. He is so happy that he can touch the model of Stonehenge in Beijing!



Photo by Wei Tong

## Celebrating a Birthday In Beijing

By Jiao Pei

The Majorettes group from France is composed of 30 young women from three different cities. Majorettes is a kind of group activity in which girls twirl and throw batons. It is very popular among young girls in Europe and the USA. Every year, the group takes part in competitions in Europe. Their lively and skillful performance won much applause from the audience at the World Park.

Just after they finished the performance, the leader said that today is three of the girls' birthday. Immediately people sent out a warm applause. The three girls received a birthday cake from the head of the World Park and then all the audience sang "Happy birthday to you". The three girls were very moved by people's warm wishes.

It is the third time for the 22-year-old girl called Kareen to spend her birthday away from home, because she often takes part in competitions or performances in other countries. However, it is the first time any of them have celebrated a birthday in China! The other two girls are Helen, 13 years old, and Jenie, who is 12 years old. It is Jenie who is holding the birthday cake in the photo and she spilt some cream on her blue jacket. However, she is so happy that she didn't pay any attention. She just smiles and says she is so happy to have a birthday party in China!



A cross-cultural kiss at Capital Steelworks Kindergarten

# Many Hands Reaching out in Friendship

## Shake Your Hips!

By Li Dan

When we were waiting for other troupes in the parking lot of Shijingshan Amusement Park, the eight Finnish girls started to dance. Although they are certainly familiar with every step, they keep practicing at every opportunity.

Their dance focuses on shaking the hips to the lively and rhythmic music. Those watching couldn't help but follow the rhythm and started shaking their own hips. At the sight of this spontaneous audience participation, the girls stopped practicing and gave an impromptu dance lesson; how to move your feet, hips, waist and hands and then follow the music. Finally, when everyone had grasped the basics, with a happy smile, everyone began to dance together.

The performance of the Egyptian dance by the Finnish troupe at the Capital Steel Company gained much applause and cheers. As the girls shook their hips crazily in front of the audience, the atmosphere reached its climax. A 72-year-old granny exclaimed she had never seen such a beautiful dance, and if she had been in a little better health, she would have got up and shaken her hips with them too.



Photo by Jackey



Photo by Chen Shuyi

## Visitors Give a Show...

By Wang Dandan

The troupe from India gave a wonderful performance, which was enthusiastically received by the firemen. But when asked what was the meaning of the dance, they were at a loss for words. The leader of the troupe explained that the gestures made at the beginning of the performance are always made in temples in India when people want to express gratitude to the gods, more or less like a thanksgiving.

The performers from Pakistan met a similar response when they presented a folk dance. After they finished, the leader asked one of the dancers to repeat a gesture, and asked the firemen if they could guess its meaning. The answers were all different, but none were correct. In fact the original meaning of the gesture was to celebrate the end of tribal war.

It is a fact that the world is becoming a global village. To cope with the changes, and to embrace an even brighter future, we all need to learn more about how people in other countries live. The half-day performance at the fire station might be an insignificant event on a global scale; however, more and more such activities will undoubtedly help to improve mutual understanding between peoples of different cultural backgrounds.

Photo by Jackey

## Short But Happy Get-together

By Li Dan

There's nothing more cheerful than seeing the innocent and artless smiling faces of children. When told today they will go to visit a kindergarten, a Belgian performer said heartily, "I love kids so much!"

Many foreign performers couldn't help quickening their steps when they saw more than 100 children waiting at the kindergarten gate with flowers in hands to give a warm welcome. They squatted down and shook hands with kids happily, just like they were old friends. The children soon got over any shyness and started to give performances and play games.

With the joyous music, foreign artists danced with little kids. Malaysian performers enjoyed playing games with the children and laughed from time to time. Hawaiian Teniu even took a boy and a girl in her arms and asked for a photo to be taken. The kindergarten was full of loud cheers, enthusiasm and love.

But time flies fast and the guests had to leave soon for the next destination. "Bye bye!" all the children waved and shouted their best wishes. One of Maori dancers told me he himself has grandchildren at the age of these lovely children and it made him feel homesick. Another Maori performer, 14-year Tiakiwad said "I'm so happy to see these lovely children and I found myself back in childhood again."



Photo by Wei Tong

## Promoting Italian Culture

By Jiao Pei

Living Venice Carnival are always the center of attention. Before the performance started, countless people came up to take photos of their gorgeous attire. Despite it being so warm standing in the sun, those Italian artists kept smiling all along, full of patience to be photographed, sometimes holding one or two Chinese kids. An old Italian lady's dress is so pretty that she stood in the sun for long and never had a rest after arriving at the World Park. I wanted to persuade her to take a seat in the shade, but she said to me: "It is our object to let more people know Italian culture, never mind, I feel happy that so many people have an interest in our culture." On the way back, she explained the dressing habits of Italian people and invited me to visit her in Italy, because she believes Italian culture enjoys a high reputation around the world. Italians are all very proud of it!



Photo by Chen Shuyi

## ...And Then Its the Firemen's Turn

By Wang Dandan

Most people have seen a fireman in action, on TV if not in real life! But not many have seen a foreigner dressed in Chinese fireman's uniform and performing as a real fire fighter.

On Tuesday, performing artists from the Philippines, Czech Republic and India visited the Fangzhuang Fire Station. The firemen there demonstrated how they prepare before setting off to put out a fire, and much to their surprise, Robinson Saclag, a performer from Philippines, mimicked their actions precisely. He did have some difficulties putting on the special protective clothing, but received ready help from the firemen. Robinson was obviously very quick in action, if lacking a little in fire-fighting skills; even so, his mimicry won warm applause from all those present.

When asked if there had been a real fire nearby, would he have served as a fireman? He smiled and replied "Of course!" He said he had never in his life put on a fireman's uniform and would remember this moment forever. "It is also a good experience for me, as I will now be qualified to be a fireman in my country", he added with a smile.



*When performances began in Oriental Plaza on Monday, there were less than 200 people in the audience. Two days later, there were more than 500 gathered around the small stage. If the festival could run for longer, it would definitely be a festival for more people.*

*Performers from different continents have given stunning performances during the last few days at Oriental Plaza. Audiences have had a precious chance to witness the exchanges between different cultures.*

## Closing Ceremony Carnival

By Jiang Zhong

All the performing troupes came to Chaoyang Park Thursday night to present their last performances for the closing ceremony.

Members of the various troupes had become good friends during the short festival, and there were many warm greetings as they met for the last time at the closing ceremony. Though it was a cool autumn night, the future headmen of Vanuatu still exposed their bodies to the cold wind and the bright moon. They danced to the rhythm of the other nations' music to warm themselves.

As one troupe performed on the stage, the next performed among the crowd. The atmosphere invigorated the audience, they shook their heads and stamped on the ground in time to the music. The scenes on the stage flowed from the beautiful scenery of the Swiss countryside, to Italy in the Middle Ages and dancing nobles in a royal palace, to the charming islands of Malaysia.

Harmony was the undisputed theme of the closing ceremony. Swiss performers beat Korean drums, Maori dancers danced to the rhythm of the waltz and the Finnish oriental dance performers learnt the movements of oriental dances from the Indian girls.

At nine o'clock the campfire was lit, and performers and the audience danced around it together. The fire warmed up the body and the hearts of everyone present; the performers are not bidding farewell to Beijing, the festival lasts forever!



Korean troupe performs a harvest dance at the closing ceremony  
Photo by Qian Bingge

## Festival of the World

By Jiang Zhong

Two dance groups from Wakayama and Nara in Japan presented dances of Chinese and Japanese styles respectively on Monday morning.

The Wakayama dance troupe performed Dunhuang Shuangshan (Double Fans of Dunhuang) in white taiji (tai chi, or shadowboxing) training gear.

Performers from Nara presented the traditional Japanese dance named Oriental Cherry. The lead performer Akashion came to Beijing almost by accident.

Akashion's daughter studied Chinese in a course given by Mo Bangfu, the leader of the Japanese troupe, in Nara. Last Christmas she sent a postcard to Mo in order to thank him for the help he gave her daughter. In the postcard she enclosed a photo of herself. In the photo she was dancing. Mo had invited Japanese movie star Ryoko Nakano to the festival in 2000. He was excited at the sight of Akashion's photo, because he was not sure who he should invite this year then. He wrote back to Akashion soon after he received the postcard. Akashion accepted the invitation without hesitation.

The choreographer of the Wakayama dance group, Hu Yedan, said that most people in the world are opposed to war, and uphold all kinds of activities that can promote world peace. The 4th International Cultural Tourism Festival in Beijing is such an activity. It is truly a festival of the world.



Akashion, lead dancer of the troupe from Nara



An Indian dancer in traditional dress

Photos by Zhang Jizhou

# Dancing in Oriental Plaza

## The day of Tibet

By Jiang Zhong

Naqu Singing and Dancing Group of Tibet has given performances in many countries, this week at Oriental Plaza. Beijingers had the opportunity to witness some of their repertoire.

The dance named Happy Herdsmen tells a love story on the plateau. The young men chase the girls they love while herding cattle on the broad grassland. They leap and jump ceaselessly to show off their strength and virility before the girls. The girls respond boldly, dancing around the boys to show their most beautiful aspects. Suddenly, the beat of the music slows; and the young people in love dance elegantly with their lovers. The love on the highland melts the snowcaps of the Himalayas!

In Erhu Dance the performers show how the Tibetans play the Erhu, a traditional Han Chinese musical instrument, in a very different way. The Erhu is usually used to represent a bitter experience in a Han musical piece; however, the Tibetans use it to create a pleasing carnival style music. Each performer forms a circle with his arms, as if playing the Erhu, and maintains this gesture for the whole dance. In order to keep the pose, they use their feet and legs to show their skills, keeping the upper part of their body quite rigid.

Tibetan performers show the happiness of their lives in all the dances and songs presented this day. It's right to describe Tibet as a Shangri-La, because life in Tibet is filled with songs and dances. National dress is



Dance of the happy herdsmen

also an important aspect of Tibetan people's lives. The performers modeled various styles of Tibetan dress at the end of the day's performance. The material for the costumes is imported from England, and the intricate decorative accessories are made of silver, agate, coral, gold and diamonds. The leader of the Tibetan performing group, Deji, says that a costume of this kind can be worth up to US\$20,000

Deji, the leader of the Naqu Singing and Dancing Group has been to Beijing seven times. The members of the group all believed that he knew Beijing very well. But he told reporters that Beijing was developing so fast, that he even didn't know what street the big buildings of the Oriental Plaza were in. When told they were in Wangfujing Street, he was very surprised.

He also said that they were performing in a small mountain village when the invitation came to take part in the festival, so they had to leave for the county seat of Naqu at once. After a two-day journey, they arrived in Naqu and from there, they traveled to the airport in Lhasa. They were in such a hurry that they had to rehearse on the airplane!

## Blessing from India

By Jiang Zhong

The performance by the Ircen Cultural Troupe from India on Wednesday afternoon began with drum and flute music presented by two young men. The drum is called Thavil and the flute Nadaswaram in India.

The young drummer beat the drum so hard that he broke one drumstick soon after the beginning of the performance. Without interrupting the beat, he immediately drew a new drumstick from his sleeve; it seemed that this was a common occurrence.

Women dressed in red traditional costumes then appeared, posing as if for prayer. They presented a dance that is performed at wedding ceremonies.

The leader P. L. Varma said that he had come to all the four previous cultural tourism festivals in Beijing. He said Beijing was developing very fast, and expressed amazement at the progress. As to the dancers, he said it was their first visit to China. They all loved the festival because people of so many nations could come together to Beijing to dance.



## The Dance of the Future Headmen

By Jiang Zhong

On the afternoon of Wednesday, the young dancers of Vanuatu performed a dance called Chicken Dance.

The leader of the troupe, Joy Andrew Inoke says the Chicken Dance is very popular in Vanuatu. It represents what a warrior saw on the battlefield with his "third eye". When asked about the performers, Inoke said they were all the sons of Headmen, their feather headdress and the grass ring on the right upper arm will change according to their age and status.

The performers leaned on their staffs and kept this pose for almost two minutes at the beginning of the dance. One performer stood in front of the group and establishes a rhythm by beating a piece of bamboo. In the next 5 minutes, the performers walked from side to side while hitting the floor with the tips of their staffs and one performer wearing a grass mat covered with chicken feathers runs quickly among the group.

When the dance reached its climax, the performers ran in a circle. The nutshells attached to their ankles collided frequently, making a clicking sound. The most interesting thing was that they kept one end of the staff to their groin and the other end pointing upwards as a symbol of the virility of man.

The troupe leader says there are many Chinese people living in Vanuatu, and that the 4th International Cultural Tourism Festival provided another opportunity for cultural exchange between the two peoples.



Two 'future headmen' from Vanuatu

## Finnish Oriental Performance

By Jiang Zhong

On Thursday morning, audiences enjoyed two Finnish dancing groups' performances.

Before the performers of the Masrah Oriental Dancing Group came onto the stage, the leader of the group, Hamed came to the center of the stage, bowed with his hands folded in front, and then began practicing Chinese wushu. Hamed was born in Afghanistan and was brought up in Finland. He has attended all four cultural tourism festivals in Beijing. He began to learn wushu at the Shaolin Temple in Henan Province in 1999, so each pose and action was very professional. He now has a Chinese Wushu Training School and a Wushu team in Finland.

When Hamed finished his performance, the performers wearing colorful and shining Arabian dress rushed onto the stage. The stunning dance told a simple story set in a small Egyptian village: a beautiful young girl married an old man of seventy, and her companions all laughed at her. The performers' roguish actions delighted the audiences, especially when they rubbed their face with one finger to show their disgust for the shameful marriage.

Another dancing group from Finland; Sambic, performed a Brazilian dance named Happy Samba. Leader of the group Ahmed Akar said that the festival, the people and the city of Beijing were all wonderful. When asked whether he would come next year, he said he hoped to come to Beijing every year, every month!



Finnish oriental dance